VISUAL SEMIOTICS: A STUDY OF IMAGES IN JAPANESE ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The thesis begins an exploration of the way in which Japanese visual semiotics works. In this it focuses on the formal representations of visual elements: *visual syntax*. Specifically, this thesis examines the way in which visual representations are realisations of three types of semiotic metafunctions: the Ideational, Textual and Interpersonal. In order to gain a clear idea about Japanese visual semiotics, I compare them with British counterparts in a relatively minor way. There is some consideration of Japanese and British cultural value systems as revealed through an analysis of the visual.

It is widely accepted that language is rule-governed, and that the rules of this system are closely related to the social and cultural environment in which they are produced. This is the basis of most work in sociolinguistics, of a very wide variety. The same assumption, however, is not normally made of other semiotic modes such as the visual.

This study uses advertisements as the data; and it is through that data that the issue of visual semiotics is considered. Advertisements are examples *par excellence* of the connection of cultural values and visual semiotics; they are also a rich source for the study of visual communication, and are widely available and comparable across Japanese and British cultures. To some small extent it shows how similarly and differently they are manifested in Japanese and British examples.

The findings of the thesis point to quite specific organizations of visual representations in Japanese culture, and to differences between the two cultures. Such differences give rise to different kinds of reading with different meanings, and are therefore of great significance in a cross-cultural semiotic environment.

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Chapter I INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of my research is to begin to explore some aspects of *Japanese visual semiotics*, with particular emphasis on *visual syntax*: the formal features of visual images. I do this by describing in detail a range of Japanese advertisements. In order to gain a sharper focus, I compare Japanese visual semiotics, in part, with the visual semiotics of some British advertisements. On the basis of what I have described and with respect to the two semiotic systems, I then consider the realisation of some aspects of the respective value systems through the visual semiotics of each culture: to what extent the account of two different visual semiotic systems can demonstrate how value systems are represented in specific cultures.

1.2 DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH INTERESTS

The present research has its point of departure in questions which arose for me during my earlier studies on language: the English language in particular, which I read throughout my first and second degrees. During my study for the second degree, I was interested in the notion of 'literariness' (Carter, 1982, 1986, 1987; Long and Carter, 1991; Nash and Carter, 1990): which linguistic features make a text 'more literary' and 'less literary', in other words, what it takes, linguistically, to be 'canonical' as opposed to 'non-canonical' writing. In so doing, I attempted to explore the way in which language conveys ideology: how the use of language (linguistic features) constructs a particular *genre*; in this case,

'literary' and 'non-literary'.

The awareness and recognition of language as a 'carrier' of ideology in the domain of 'literary works' ('literary canons') brought me to explore the same issue in a different domain: language in everyday-life contexts, such as the language of newspapers and advertisements (Leech, 1966; Carter and Nash, 1990; Bell, 1991; Cook, 1992; Fairclough, 1989, 1995a, 1995b; Fowler, 1991). However, when one looks at language use in these 'texts', one notices that there is more than just language involved in the meaning making. Many newspaper articles, for example, consist not only of language but also of visual images such as photographs and forms of illustration. When it comes to advertising, it is often the case that visual images play a primary role, more significant than language: most advertisements make considerable use of visual images along with language, both in printed advertisements and television commercials. The generic structure of these 'texts' makes it necessary to consider visuals as a carrier of meaning along with language: the visual as meaningful. These 'texts' become ideological in the process of production and reading within socio-cultural contexts.

The fact that the visual, as well as language, is actually a means of ideological realisation has been observed in numerous studies; for example, of traditional paintings which have been looked at in terms of their cultural, social and historical perspectives (Baxandall, M., 1972; Baxandall, L., 1972; Berger, 1961, 1972, Gombrich, 1960, 1982, 1984; Panofsky, 1970, 1972; Fyfe and Law, 1988, Mitchell, 1980; Staniszewski, 1995). In undertaking this project, I have become interested in the way in which ideology is manifested in various kinds of visual representations, in particular, those texts that I considered as examples of Orientalism (Said, 1978, 1994), Occidentalism (Creighton, 1992) and Counter-orientalism (Moeran, 1991). I was particularly inspired by Said's

notion of Orientalism in that it gave me a new way of looking at representations of the East and Eastern cultures as constructed by the West, as a manifestation of the power relations between them.

Occidentalism (Creighton, 1992) is the concept through which the West is perceived by the Orient. Counter-orientalism is what Moeran considers as a particular 'counter-response' to the age-old concept of Orientalism, which Said claims has been realised across various forms such as literature, philosophy, history and representations in art.

These ideological concepts are often manifested in the form of what is called 'cultural stereotypes'. The notions of Orientalism, Occidentalism and Counter-orientalism are useful in the sense that they provide the foundation for analysing cultural representations in visual images. More importantly, the representation of these ideological concepts can be explored not just through language but also through other modes of representations such as visual images.

I was interested in the representation of ideology in visual representations: as a starting point, these concepts of ideology helped me to look at visual images as a manifestation of ideology. I started focusing on the representation of Japanese people, culture and society in the British media, such as newspaper articles, television commercials and printed advertisements in newspapers and magazines (Benedict, 1972; Barthes, 1982; Moeran, 1984, 1991, 1992, 1996; Skov and Moeran, 1995; Treat, 1996; Wilkinson, 1990; Oshima, 1992; Morley and Robins, 1995; Littlewood, 1996). That is, how cultural stereotypes of Japanese people, culture and society are depicted through the visual mode of communication as opposed to their Western counterparts, and in what way these visual representations construct a certain ideology: a stereotype of 'Japaneseness'.

Said (1978) focused exclusively on the domain of high culture, such as canonical literature, plays and paintings, as the forms of representation of what has been defined as 'the Orient' by 'the West'. My view is that ideology can be manifested not only through the forms of representation known as 'high culture' but also through 'popular culture' that exists in everyday-life contexts, such as television programmes and advertisements (Bell, 1991; Hartley, 1982; Fiske, 1978; Morley, 1992; Williamson, 1978; Leiss et al, 1990; Dyer, 1982; Goldman, 1992; Goldman and Papson, 1996).

Cultural representations are materialised and produced with different semiotic modes (or different resources of communication), such as language and visual images. Language as a means for cultural representation (or language as a means for representation of ideology) has been explored in a great number of studies in the field of linguistics (Hodge and Kress 1988, 1993; Kress 1983, 1986, 1987, 1996a; Fowler, Hodge and Kress, 1979; Fowler, 1991; Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a; van Dijk 1985; Simpson, 1993; Birch, 1989, 1996; Bourdieu, 1991; Moeran, 1984; Gumperz, 1982). Whereas visual images as a means of cultural representation have been studied most notably in the domain of anthropology (Bateson and Meads, 1947) and have recently emerged as the focus of sociological research. (Goffman, 1979; Dingwall et al, 1991, Berger, 1972, 1980; Ball and Smith, 1992; Becker, 1981; Chaplin, 1994; Cooke and Wollen, 1995; Sontag, 1979; Loftus, 1988).

The question arose for me: *How* is it possible to account for visual representations as ideology?; Is there a 'visual grammar' which operates in visual representations? The notion of 'the visual as carrier of ideology', as an echo of 'language as ideology' (demonstrated in Hodge and Kress, 1992; Kress, 1989) has made me aware of the significance and relevance of research in 'visual grammar'. Since an exploration of the

visual has led me to semiotics, as the major approach to analysing visual images, I draw on visual semiotics to illustrate how a 'visual grammar' works. The consideration of the visual as carrier of ideology in specific social circumstances also leads to the question of cultural specificness in visual representations and to what extent an account of visual semiotics can 'reveal' the fundamental value systems of a given culture.

1.3 LANGUAGE VERSUS VISUALS AS A SEMIOTIC MODE

It is widely accepted that language is rule-governed, and that the rules of this system are closely related to the social and cultural environment in which they are produced: this is language as a manifestation of *ideology* (Hodge and Kress, 1988, 1993; Kress, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1996; Fowler, Hodge and Kress, 1979; Fowler, 1991; Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a; van Dijk, 1985; Simpson, 1993). Among semiotic modes, language has been treated as the dominant mode of communication (Crystal and Davy, 1969; Carter and Nash, 1990; Leech, 1966; Tanaka, 1994; Vestergaard and Schroder, 1985; Halliday, 1978; Fowler, 1991; Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b; van Dijk 1985; Simpson 1993; Birch, 1989, 1996). Considering the increasing use of the visual mode (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996; van Leeuwen and Kress, 1992; Andrews, 1998; Raney, 1997; Jenks, 1995; Lewis, 1996; Margolin, 1989; Mitchell, 1980, 1995; Moeran, 1991, 1996; Tufte, 1990, 1997; Skov and Moeran, 1995) and other modes such as actions, sound and music (Barthes, 1977; Cook, 1992; van Leeuwen, 1987), however, it can be said that for a full understanding of meaning making, not only language but also the visual mode, has to be considered in a more systematic way.

Regularities in language have been 'formally' established as 'grammar'. With respect

to language, there has been a *codification* which regulates its various uses. This is 'grammar' as a description of a *code*. The codification refers to a 'grammar' as a set of legitimated regulations such as grammar taught in the classroom, which is mainly represented in the form of school textbooks. It also exists in the context of social 'conventions' that have been socially and culturally reinforced and become regularised.

There is another use of the term 'grammar'. For example, native users of English have an intuitive knowledge of how to use their language without referring to the *codified grammar*. This is a 'grammar *in use*'. 'Grammar *in use*' is related to 'grammar as a *code*' in the way that some aspects of 'grammar *in use*' have the potential to become 'grammar as a *code*' as the result of reinforcement in a social and cultural contexts.

Likewise, as 'grammar' in language can be viewed from at least two different aspects ('grammar as a *code*' and 'grammar *in use*'), I wish to consider 'grammar' in visuals, in terms of the two different functions of 'grammar', parallel to that of language: grammar as a *code* and grammar *in use*. The definition of visual grammar as a *code* can be a set of regulations that the user of the visual mode is expected to follow (in the same manner as English speakers must follow various grammatical regulations; for example, the third person pronoun is followed by a main verb with *s*)[1] Visual grammar *in use*, by contrast, is likely to be realised in the way in which a given individual communicates through the use of visual forms structured in particular ways with others and in which they make use of the visual in his/her everyday life context. Just as a codified grammar in language emerges from 'grammar *in use*', 'visual grammar *in use*' marks one stage of the

[1]Visual images such as pictorial signs for public instructions (e.g. Ladies/Gentleman: toilets; highway code) are examples of visual grammar as a reinforced and conventionalised *code*.

development of 'visual grammar as a *code*'.

Children, before they start writing, first draw pictures and they do this without referring to the structure of forms in any particular 'grammar book' for the visual (Kress, 1996b). They learn to use and understand various visual images as information. Not only children but also adults are exposed to all sorts of visual information in their everyday life context and they understand what is visually realised as relevant information. Both adult and child users produce texts using the visual mode (such as visual instructions and notes with pictures) in order to exchange information with others. These exemplify the cases where visual 'grammar *in use*' is at work, which is concerned with an individual's ability to make use of the visual mode of communication, seemingly without the restriction of regulations in the visual.

Visual images have been studied from various perspectives, such as aesthetics (Gombrich, 1984; Baxandall, 1972), art history (Baxandall, 1972; Gombrich, 1984), art theories (Arnheim, 1969, 1974, 1988; Gombrich, 1960, 1982; Panofsky, 1970, 1972; Bryson, 1990; Mitchell, 1980, 1986), sociology of art (Fyfe and Law, 1988; Wolff, 1993; Chaplin, 1994), and culture (Barthes, 1964, 1977, 1984; Williamson, 1978; Messaris, 1997; Moeran, 1991, 1996), which are discussed in Chapter II. Regularities of visuals, the way in which visual images work, in this way, have been established in a diverse manner across different disciplines. Visual images are no less systematised than language, however this has gone unrecognised except for a small number of Art theorists (Arnhem, 1969, 1974, 1988 and Gombrich, 1960, 1982, 1984).

When children, at an early age, start drawing pictures, they appear to do so in a less restricted manner than when they later learn to write, the visual is seemingly left to children's own devices without anything 'solid' for them to follow as a visual regulation

(such a regulation as, for example, 'something important is always placed on the right hand side or in the centre or in the background of the given space'). Adults as well as children encounter a flow of visual images in everyday life environments; through work, social activities and personal hobbies. They make use of the visual without particularly conscious reflection, as though visuals are there to be used, understood and to be created as a rule-free mode of communication: that the visual is something 'transparent'. (This leads to the notion of universality of the visual that suggests that there is no systematic regulation at work in visual communication, so that it can be understood and also produced in the same manner, regardless of the contexts in which it is located.) Looking at the use of the visual in a systematic way, as a *code,* is a domain in which little research has been done; and in part this has led me to investigate the way in which the visual operates, in other words, to investigate the domain of 'visual grammar'.

1.4 THE ASPECT OF VISUAL SEMIOTICS TO BE FOCUSED ON: Lexis versus Syntax

In relation to the notion of 'visual grammar', the primary concern of this research is on the 'formal' and 'syntactical' structures of visuals: what I (and Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996) call "visual syntax", as opposed to the way of looking at visuals in terms of its *content*: what I call (and Kress and van Leeuwen, Ibid) "visual lexis" (for a detailed discussion of this see Chapter III). In order to consider visuals in a systematic way, I will draw particular attention to formal structures of visuals (visual syntax), such as the way in which visual processes are realised, the way in which visual space is used for the production of certain meanings and the way in which formal structures of the visual

contribute to interaction between the text and the viewer.

While visual lexis is concerned with the units of visual elements as they are, visual syntax has to do with the relationship between one element and another. It is in no way my intention to dismiss the role of visual lexis in meaning making, but my primary concern, with respect to the establishment of visual grammar, is with visual syntax. The way in which visual elements are structured gives rise to various meanings and this is, to me, where a 'visual grammar' comes to play a significant role. By attempting a detailed description of visual syntax, 'as a carrier of ideological meanings' (Hodge and Kress, 1993:208), I hope to demonstrate how visuals can be looked at in a systematic manner, as a *code*.

1.5 CULTURAL VALUE SYSTEMS IN VISUAL SYNTAX: a challenge to the notion of universality

With respect to the issue of visual images as cultural and ideological realisation, I want to question the notion of universality of the visual: that is to claim that visuals can be a culturally transparent medium of communication (Neurath, 1937, 1948; Lupton, 1989) as well as language; 'universality in language' (Greenberg, 1963, 1966, 1971; Hockett, 1966). Cultural specificness in relation to language has been dealt with by a number of scholars (Halliday, 1978; Sapir, 1921; Whorf, 1956; Penn, 1972), that is to see language as a production of a given culture and the way that language is used is greatly determined by the culture that conditions its linguistic system.

Then what about the relationship between the visual and culture? There is a tendency to regard the visual, unlike language, as a universal phenomenon. By this I mean that it

is assumed that visuals can operate as a mode of communication regardless of a given culture and without any problems that are caused by cultural difference. In other words, visuals are considered to be a culturally transparent medium of communication, and that people understand information carried by the visual mode 'equally' regardless of cultural differences. This stance, as this thesis hopes to demonstrate, overlooks the significant impact of cultures on 'visual grammar' (when difference in language grammar has been described in detail), and it implicitly maintains the higher status of language over other modes of communication.

In order to explore the way in which a culture manifests visual semiotics, I will use some British advertising texts along with Japanese examples on the grounds that the comparative analysis of semiotic systems can open up new perspectives: I believe that Japanese systems of visual semiotics can be better explained when they are compared with other systems; in my case comparing the Japanese with British visual semiotics. One further aim is to focus on the way in which Japanese and British visual semiotics can represent the underlying value systems of each culture: namely cultural representation through visual representations.

Chapter II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I survey the literature in relevant fields of studies, involving visual images and visual communication; and I set out the theoretical framework on which the work of my thesis is based.

Section **2.2** draws on studies of visual images from various perspectives: art history (Gombrich, 1980; Baxandall, 1972; Berger 1972); art theories (Arnheim, 1988, 1974 1969; Gombrich, 1960, 1982; Panofsky, 1970, 1972), sociology of art (Chaplin, 1994; Wolff, 1993; Goffman, 1979; Dingwall et al, 1991); visual images as cultural product, with particular reference to the studies of advertisements (Willamson, 1978; Barthes, 1977; Messaris, 1997; Cook, 1992; Forceville, 1996; O'Toole, 1994; Tanaka, 1994; Myers, 1994; Vestergaard and Schroder, 1985; Moeran, 1991, 1996); semiotics (Saussure, 1974; Barthes, 1967, 1977, 1982, 1984; Williamson, 1978; Metz, 1974, 1977, 1982; Hodge and Kress, 1988; O'Toole, 1994; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996).

Building on my discussion in section **2.2**, section **2.3** will outline a theory for visual semiotics, which is directly relevant to my descriptive analysis of data. I will provide a basis of descriptive analytical categories to be drawn on in Chapter III, which is mainly based on Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996), Halliday (1978, 1985), Thibault (1997), O'Toole (1994).

Although the main focus of this thesis is on visual communication, it is necessary to take account of the way in which language operates, because the texts which I investigate consist of the visual and the verbal modes. Section **2.4** focuses on the way in which the

function of language in a given text is explored and described. There I will introduce Critical Discourse Analysis[2] as a theoretical framework that provides a theory and a descriptive position from which messages conveyed through language can be analysed (Fairclough, 1989; 1992, 1995; Fowler, 1986, 1991; Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew, 1979; Hodge and Kress, 1993).

Finally, in section **2.5**, I will attempt to outline an integrated approach towards visual and verbal modes of meaning making, which I hope will enable me to look at *any* text which consists of visual and verbal elements as an integrated phenomenon rather than as containing two different, separate entities.

2.2 LITERATURE SURVEY ON STUDIES OF VISUAL IMAGES

2.2.1 What is an image?

This thesis is a contribution to a study of visual communication; it focuses on visual representations through images. The term 'images' is one of the most taken-for-granted words in everyday life. There is a necessity to clarify in what sense I deal with *images*, in other words, what I mean by *images* in my research. Therefore, I want to begin with the questions: "what is an image?", "how can an image be defined?"

Mitchell (1986:10) proposes a typology of images in the form of a family tree (Figure 2-1). It is divided into five different categories: *Graphic* (pictures, statues, designs);

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[2]Critical Discourse Analysis is related to Halliday's systemic functional Linguistics in the 'version' that I will adopt. Socio-cultural aspects in relation to the use of language is its main concern; while the version of CDA represented by Teun van Djik, Ruth Wodak and Paul Chilton focus more on cognitive, psychological, and sociological/ political aspects of language use.

Optical (mirrors, projections); *Perceptual* (sense data, "species" appearances); *Mental* (dreams, memories, ideas, fantasmata); *Verbal* (metaphors, descriptions). He argues that the first two categories are "called by that name in a strict, proper, or literal sense" (Ibid:12) and the last two categories "involve some extended, figurative, or improper use of the term"(Ibid:12). Although his assertion of a dichotomy of "proper" versus "improper" of these 'different' types of images lacks accuracy as an argument in the sense that it is not argued for in detail, his consideration of images in relation to intellectual disciplines helps to analyse images in a systematic way:

> mental imagery belongs to psychology and epistemology; optical imagery to physics; graphic, sculptural, and architectural imagery to the art historian; verbal imagery to the literary critic; perceptual images occupy a kind of border region where physiologists, neurologists, psychologists, art historians, and students of optics find themselves collaborating with philosophers and literary critics (Ibid: 10)

It is what Mitchell defines as *Graphic* (pictorial representation) that is the primary concern of my research. *Images* in this sense therefore means *visual* images as opposed to other types of images which I refer to as *visual representations.* In the following section, I review some significant discussions in the literature around the treatment of visual images.

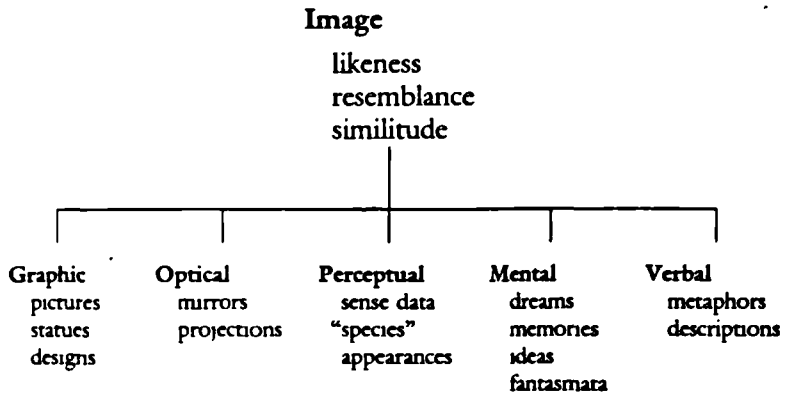

Figure 2-1 ***From Mitchell (1986:10)***

2.2.2 Art theory/ art history

First of all, I will focus on some ways of looking at images in the domain of art theory and art history. O'Toole (1994: 169) points to "three typical ways of discussing art":

> The kind of art history which concerns itself with the circumstances of a work's original commission; the 'iconographic' approach which tries to trace the origins of a work's subject matter through literary and philosophical sources; and the study of pure composition, usually unrelated to either of the other two approaches.

Baxandall (1972) is an example of the first approach, where he discusses fifteenth century Italian Renaissance paintings in the light of social history. His study exemplifies the use of works of art for the illustration of social historical aspects in relation to the manner in which these works were produced. He focuses on the "style of pictures [paintings]" from which he draws social historical evidence of fifteenth century Italy, which shows common ground between social history and art history.

What does 'style' actually mean in the work of Baxandall? To him, the term refers to the 'concept' or 'theme' of a given painting which art theorists in the period used. 'Concept' or 'theme' is represented in each visual element or in the combination of several elements, and understanding of them requires background knowledge in its social, cultural and religious environment.

For example, in his reading of Botticelli's *Primavera*, he points out, with respect to its central figure of Venus, the significance of the viewer's recognition of a distinction between a religious theme and something that is secular:

> the central figure of Venus is not beating time to the dance of the Graces but inviting us with hand and glance into her kingdom. We miss the point of the picture if we mistake the gesture. We also miss something if we lack the sense of a certain distinction between religious and profane gesture. (Ibid:70)

It is possible to see the 'prescriptive' nature of this reading of this painting. There is a

conventional or rather a fixed set of meaning for certain gestures in a religious context, which is crucial for the grasp of the 'right' meanings of the painting. Baxandall's "reading of social history out of the *style* of pictures" involves deciphering a symbolic representation in the painting. This is the level of analysis Panofsky (1970:61) calls 'iconography':

> It [iconographic analysis] presupposes a familiarity with specific themes or concepts as transmitted through literary sources, whether acquired by purpose-full reading or by oral tradition.

Panofsky's (1970) concern is, like that of Baxandall's, "the subject matter or meaning of works of art", as opposed to the form. Panofsky's conceptualisation of meaning consists of three strata: *pre-iconographic description; iconographic analysis; iconological interpretation.* These are not separate practices but work simultaneously as three aspects that forms the overall meaning of a given work of art. Panofsky makes a distinction between *iconographic analysis* and *iconological interpretation* (Ibid:58):

> Iconology, then is a method of interpretation which arises from synthesis rather than analysis. And as the correct identification of motifs is the prerequisite of their correct iconographic analysis, so is the correct analysis of images, stories and allegories the prerequisite of their correct iconological interpretation.

In my view, both iconographic analysis and iconological interpretation certainly give a reading of a work of art a deeper insight, and they are useful approaches for the understanding the work in a 'full' macro (not only micro) context. Both approaches are concerned with, as it were, existing 'concepts' or 'themes', within which a work is supposed to be produced.

Gombrich's *Art and Illusion* (1960) adds the dimension of 'perception' to that of

'concepts' and 'themes' for the account of visual representations[3]. That is, he is concerned to show how that human perception of visual representations is connected to the recognition of specific concepts in the work. Gombrich (1960) uses a wide range of visual material and not only what is considered as 'high art', such as canonical painting, sculpture and architecture but also other textual objects such as posters and advertisements that, in Gombrich's term, "arouse" the viewer's attention. In his *Art and Illusion* (1960) Gombrich recognises a 'grammar' of visual representations; "something like a language of pictorial representation", which can refer to systematic regularities (although in his study of 1960, Gombrich does not propose a specific and systematic *language* of visual images) that allows the viewer a specific reading of perception and conceptualisation.

A famous mosaic from Pompeii, *Cave Canem*, is one of his examples in his later study (1972) that explores the role of visual images. Here the image of a ferocious-looking dog is, according to Gombrich, recognised as a warning "with a knowledge of social customs and conventions", which takes a view that interpretation of visual images is something socially conditioned and something to be learned; therefore it leads to a concept of "something like language of pictorial representation".

Gombrich's departure from a stance of taking visual images as something socially conditioned and conventionalised can be seen in his later work *Image and Code* (1981).

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[3]Gombrich's general account of art *The Story of Art* (1984) uses an iconographic analysis, which covers a wide range of works of art, such as paintings, iconology and architecture, in Western (European) countries from the prehistoric period through to the present century, with a relatively thinner coverage of Eastern art (Islam and China from the second century through the thirteenth century). His discussion of art works are in the light of their historical setting "towards understanding the master's artistic aims (Ibid:2)".

Here Gombrich asserts in relation to the same example of *Cave Canem* (Ibid:285):

> The picture of the dog is not meant to teach but to warn. It will do its job best if it looks menacing. I am convinced that we do not have to acquire knowledge about teeth and claws in the same way in which we learn a language.

This proposition is rather ambiguous in that he neither denies nor admits the existence of a "language of pictorial representation" and this can have a further implication (regardless of Gombrich's intention) that visual perception is almost instinctive and innately programmed rather than something to be learned. In fact he continues in the latter part of the book (Ibid: 287):

> Recognising an image is certainly a complex process and draws on many human faculties, both inborn and acquired. But without a natural starting-point we could never have acquired that skill.

Although the question remains as to what Gombrich means by "a natural starting-point", this proposition still appears to indicate the shift of his stance regarding what brings human perception of visual representations that leads to recognition of various concepts: to emphasise the significance of human perception (which is for him psychologically orientated rather than socially conditioned) for the understanding of visual representations.

It is on these grounds that Bryson (1983) in his critique of Gombrich, labels him as a "perceptualist". In other words, this stance of Gombrich, which gives primacy to perception (although it has to be noted that this is the case particularly with relation to his later work in 1981, rather than his earlier work like *Art and Illusion*) has given Bryson an opportunity to argue the validity of a semiotic approach as opposed to what Bryson calls "perceptualism":

> Perceptualism, the doctrine whose most eloquent spokesman is undoubtedly Gombrich, describes image-making entirely in terms of these secret and private events, perceptions and sensations occurring in invisible recesses of the painter's

> and the viewer's mind. It is as though understanding in mathematics had been reduced to the occurrence of 'Now I see it!' experiences, or the test of whether or not someone read aright were whether he or she experiences a 'Now I can read!' sensation. The point is that mathematics and reading are activities of the sign, and that painting is, also. My ability to recognise an image neither involves, *nor makes necessary inference towards,* the isolated perceptual field of the image's creator. It is rather, an ability which presupposes competence within social, that is, socially constructed, codes of recognition. And the crucial difference between the term 'perception' and the term 'recognition' is that the latter is *social* (Ibid:65).

Bryson's criticism of Gombrich stems from the seemingly incompatible approaches towards visual images: visual images as non-social perception versus social signs. Bryson's point against Gombrich is clearly focused on Bryson's understanding of Gombrich's approach which he regards as failing to take account of social and historical conditioning of visual images and it "tends to discuss visual representations as if it were constituted by ashistorical constants based either an human perception or in the universal conditions of human experience (Ibid:2)".

Bryson's critique of Gombrich, however, overlooks his analysis of art works in the light of social and historical settings (*The Story of Art,* 1984) and reduces his studies a single-sided stance, which Bryson labels as 'perceptualism'. In spite of Gombrich's increasing emphasis on perception, or the innate psychological conditioning of humans in his study (1981), Gombrich does not completely deny the significance of a knowledge of social conventions, namely what Bryson means by "social construction".

Another scholar must be mentioned here, in the context of this discussion, Rudolf Arnheim. Arnheim (1969, 1974, 1982) shares with Gombrich the view that visual representation should be seen from a psychological perspective, and human perception of visual phenomena is a key to his work. Throughout these studies, his account of visual images overall tends to focus on the formal structures of visual images, which he

discusses along with various types of visual representations which he draws from children's drawings, from paintings, sculpture and architecture. One could argue that Arnheim discusses these examples primarily in relation to human perception with its application of Gestalt psychology[4]; it is rather form-centred and "the language of this kind of theory is, for the most part, formalistic, and grounded in the psychology of perception" (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:47). It does not mean, however, that he *excludes* other elements involving the understanding of a given visual representation, such as iconographic data (Arnheim 1969).

For example, Arnheim's account (1969) of Rembrandt's *Christ at Emmaus* shows his integrated analysis of formal structures (and what it does to perception) and iconographic data. In the painting, there are four figures, including Christ. Arnheim points out, first of all, a triangular arrangement in which the figure of Christ forms an apex and he reads this formal structure in the light of "the traditional hierarchy of religious pictures": the trinity. Next Arnheim draws attention to another triangular arrangement which positions the figure of Christ "no longer dominant but fitted into the sloping edge", making the figure of a servant a culminating point. This combines formal analysis (based on the psychology of perception) with an iconographic (and semiotic) account:

> Rembrandt's thinking strikingly envisages, in the basic form of the painting, the Protestant version of the New Testament. The humility of the Son of God is expressed compositionally not only in the slight deviation of the head from the central axis of the otherwise symmetrical pyramid of the body; Christ appears also as subservient to another hierarchy, which has its high point in the humblest figure of the group, namely, the servant....What matters here, however, is that the basic compositional scheme, often considered a purely formal device for pleasant arrangement, is in fact the carrier of the central subject (269-270).

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[4]Its pioneers include Max Wertheimer and his colleagues Wolfgang Kohler and Kurt Koffka in 1910s. The emphasis of Gestalt psychology is in the form, which is based on experimental work on such as optical illusions and distortions.

This type of analysis, which explores concepts or themes of a visual representation within formal structures, shows the possibility of looking at visual forms in the light of meanings that are derived from a macro-level context (in the case of Arnheim's analysis of Rembrandt's painting, the macro-level context is that of the religious themes of Christianity). In this respect, Arnheim's formal accounts of visual representations, which are grounded in psychology of perception, particularly in his *Art and Visual Perception* (1974) and *The Power of the Centre* (1982) deserve to be recognised as more than a mere study of visual structures in terms of human perception; his account combines analytic perspectives (with an emphasis on the formal aspect of visual representations) with other disciplines like iconography, whose concern is what visual elements symbolise within a certain socio-cultural context.

The work of Tufte (1990, 1997) is an extension of the art theories and histories of scholars such as Arnheim and Gombrich in the sense that he uses a wider range of visual material. His concern is for the effectiveness of visual images in conveying information, and this is illustrated with case studies including government publications, technical manuals, maps, historical documents and typography. His approach towards visual images is different from those mentioned in this section; in that he discusses visual images without reference to descriptive categories such as lexis, syntax (or forms), icons and symbols, but draws attention to the way in which knowledge itself is represented. The relevance of his work to this thesis is limited by the fact that there is no conceptual framework for the understanding of visual images. However, he clearly demonstrates how the taken-for-granted visual images in everyday life provide information.

2.2.3 Sociological approaches to visual images

In this section, I will focus on approaches from a sociological perspective of visual representations, which take a different angle towards visual images from that of art theories and history. As Bryson (1983) has pointed out, historical and social conditions have to be taken into consideration for a full understanding of visual representations. Sociological approaches view visual images as a manifestation of social phenomena rather than seeing them purely in the aesthetic or perceptual domain.

Wolff (1993) discusses the positioning of 'art' in general[5] in a sociological context and rejects the conventional view (which she claims is conventionalised by some art theoreticians and historians) that art is divine inspiration which is exclusively distributed to those who are considered 'geniuses'. Wolff argues:

> against the romantic and mystical notion of art as the creation of 'genius', transcending existence, society and time, and argues that it is rather the complex construction of a number of real, historical factors....I take a different starting point, and work towards a demonstration that art and literature have to be seen as historical, situated and produced, and not as descending as divine inspiration to people of innate genius (Ibid:1)

Wolff's stance is clear in her positioning of art in social context: the role of art in relation to sociological and ideological factors is central to the analysis of any works of art. Considering works of art as the production of society entails her interest in a dynamic relationship of the reader (perception), the writer (production) and text of works (product) in a given society at a give time.

Berger's (1961 in 1972) account of Impressionist paintings in Paris in the 1870s - 1920s somehow goes against Wolff's notion of art as 'social production' in that he views

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[5] Wolff does not deal with a specific type of work of art: "'art' in its generic meaning...More importantly, perhaps, film, literature, painting and rock music can all, in some sense, be seen as repositories of cultural meaning"(1993:4).

that "the great pioneering works of Cezanne, Picasso, Braque, Juan Gris, etc., were all produced in an atmosphere of social isolation (Ibid:217)". Berger in his paper *Problems of Socialist Art* compares these Impressionist painters with political revolutionaries in post-Stalinist USSR, arguing that the former has less impact as "effective means of propaganda" than the latter, which he attributes to the type of social contexts in which paintings were produced in relation to the possible shift of the position of art in society because of newly developed media that provide other types of art forms:

> In the past only a privileged few or the unusually gifted have been in a position to appreciate painting in this way [as the means of extending and sharpening the meaning of our sense of sight]. In a classless society every man has the right to develop his senses beyond the demands of necessity to the point of full self-consciousness. Thus the fact that other media have taken over some of the functions of painting does not mean the end of painting.... in an expanding classless culture painting will probably become a more contemplative art, and that in our present bourgeois cultures painting has already inevitably ceased to be a directly effective means of propaganda. How many people can look at painting compared with the number of people who can read a book, or see a film? (Ibid:219).

Changes in society and the development of media technology have given rise to the re-consideration of the role of art. Susan Sontag (1979) focuses on the role of a newly emerged medium for visual representations: photography. Sontag rejects the idea of photographs as "mimesis of reality"[6], that is that photographs directly "mirror reality". Sontag adopts a rather critical tone about the role of photographs, by arguing that photographic images "hide rather than disclose" (Ibid:23). She also points out as an example of 'non-mimesis of reality' that photographs have been used to represent particular aspects in photographed objects, such as 'beauty' rather than the 'ugly'. This gives ground to her claim that the camera lies and that "The news that the camera could

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[6]Roland Barthes in his earlier work (1961) takes the view that photographic images are 'non-coded' and a faithful reproduction of reality, a view which he changed by the time of his later work *Camera Lucida* (1981)

lie made getting photographed much more popular (Ibid:86)".

While denying the 'transparency' of photographic images as a means of representing reality: "Instead of just recording reality, photographs have become the norm for the way things appear to us, thereby changing the very idea of reality, and of realism (Ibid:87)", Sontag recognises the "camera's twin capacities": "to subjectivize reality and to objectify it" (Ibid:178). She relates the former to 'art' and the latter to 'document', although she does not place any significance on separating them:

> To us, the difference between the photographer as an individual eye and the photographer as an objective recorder seems fundamental, the difference often regarded, mistakenly, as separating photography as art from photography as document. But both are logical extensions of what photography means: note-taking on, potentially, everything in the world, from every possible angle (Ibid:176).

It can be argued that Sontag's stance is sometimes rather ambivalent about photographic images either as aesthetic productions or as social production, compared to Wolff's (1993), who firmly believes in the significance of the social conditioning of production of art works. This may be due to the fact that Sontag is dealing with one specific type of visual representations while Wolff's argument is aimed at art in general, in a broader sense.

Sontag's arguments on photography also question specific characteristics of photographs which are different from other types of visual representations such as paintings: photographs reflect reality in a way that paintings cannot, and yet are not fully mimetic. Paintings and photographs are two types of visual representations which are often compared, and yet are not unrelated in terms of impact on contemporary capitalist societies (Berger 1972)[7]. It is the domain of photographic images as 'document' rather

[7] Berger illustrates the way in which the values of canonical paintings are transformed into the making of other types of visual representations such as

than that as 'art' that some sociologists and anthropologists started drawing attention to for their explorations of a given society; this goes against Sontag's position about photography, in which she regards them as two aspects in one photographic representation.

The use of photographs for anthropological and sociological research is based, according to Smith and Ball (1992:4):

> The powerful claim to realism represented by photography has made it an attractive tool for the anthropologist and sociologist: It appears to permit the rapid and faithful recording of visual phenomena.

Although as Sontag points out, the question remains as to the issue of "realism represented by photography", there have been a number of anthropological and sociological studies that treat photographic images as a major source of representing 'the seen world'.[8] For example, Bateson and Mead (1947) illustrate Balinese culture using photographic images; by looking at the way in which Balinese 'ethos' is visually represented in those photographs. Goffman (1979) also makes considerable use of photographs in order to illustrate the representation of gender issues and the display of cultural codes in Western society. His study has demonstrated that visual images from everyday life contexts are a useful source of data for sociological research. His approach is in contrast to those of art theorists who used canonical images and as such widens the scope of visual analysis. Dingwall et al (1991) explore the way in which the notion of parenthood is represented and how it is differently realised in Japan and Britain through

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commercial photographs (like advertisements).

[8] Anthropology has traditionally made more use of photographs as visual data than Sociology. "Sociology is primarily a verbally rather than visually communicated discipline....tables, graphs, and histograms appear to be the sociologist's preferred visual data (Ball and Smith:11)"

visual representations in public and private parenthood literature.

Goffman's, and Dingwall et al's use of photographs are different from that of Bateson and Mead. While Goffman uses visual images from advertising campaigns, Bateson and Mead use photographs taken by them as a private record. Both types of research, in their use of photographs with a commercial purpose and photographs as a personal record, are worth mentioning in the sense that they make use of visual images as "topics of investigation" rather than as having peripheral, secondary "illustrative functions" (Ball and Smith Ibid:14). The photographs that Bateson and Mead use as data were of Balinese parents' interacting with their children in domestic circumstances as evidence of how Balinese culture conditions the development of personality. I will give a detailed account particularly of Goffman (1979) and Dingwall et al (1991) on the grounds that my research deals with advertisements: types of visual representations with a commercial purpose, rather than photographs taken by the researcher.

Goffman (1979) draws attention to several formal categories of visual elements in advertisements, such as the relative *size* of depicted participants and the positioning of female hands. Goffman argues that men as against women, or adults as against children tend to be depicted relatively bigger, and this is a realisation of the position of these different gender / age groups of people in society. The placement of participants also manifests social relations. For example, women and children are more likely represented on beds or floors, lying down instead of standing or sitting on a chair: "high physical place symbolising high social place (Ibid:43)". Goffman reads a particular posture or a facial expression of a given participant in terms of social relation. For instance, the 'knee bend' which is more typically present with the depiction of women carries "an expression of ingratiation, submissiveness, appeasement (Ibid:46)". Smile in female participants is

taken as an expression of 'inferiority'.

Goffman also points out that women tend to be depicted with more explicit feelings than men which "remove them [women] psychologically from the social situation at large (Ibid:57)". What Goffman calls "anchored drift" is another characteristic which is likely to be the case of the depiction of women, where women are allowed to 'drift away' from the reality but this is after all under men's control, therefore 'anchored' instead of 'free' drift.

With respect to the way in which one participant is related to another in a given advertisement, Goffman points out that it tends to be women who "apparently have license to use more of a man's body in this utilitarian way than the reverse (Ibid:80)", which is illustrated by the way in which women are depicted leaning against men, or resting their head on men's shoulders in advertisements. Goffman reads this type of visual structure, the way in which female participants are related to male participants, as a visualisation of the position of women: they need protection from men.

Goffman's visual analysis is schematic and precise in relation to the representation in advertisement of gender roles in society, but the question arises: to what extent do these images count as a representation of gender relations in everyday life, in other words, how far are these photographic images valid as visual data for a sociological account of gender display. He never forgets to remind us of the particularity of these images for commercial purposes: what he calls "hyper-ritualization":

> The standardization, exaggeration, and simplification that characterize rituals in general are in commercial posing found to an extended degree, often rekeyed as babyiness, mockery, and in other forms of unseriousness.... So both in advertisements and life we are interested in colourful poses, in externalization; but in life we are, in addition, stuck with a considerable amount of dull footage. Nonetheless, whether we pose for a picture or execute an actual ritual action, what we are presenting is a commercial, an ideal representation under the

> auspices of its characterizing the way things really are....Advertisers conventionalize our conventions, stylize what is already a stylization, make frivolous use of what is already something considerably cut off from contextual controls. Their hype is hyper-ritualization (Ibid:84).

Goffman, while being aware of the 'hyper-ritualization' characteristic of visual representations in advertisements, believes that advertising photographs make useful resources for 'documenting' social aspects.

Goffman's illustration of gender roles in society using advertising photographs exemplifies social aspects of visual images, but his concern with the human body, with postures and facial expressions as formal features of visual participants in *Gender Advertisements* certainly has potential for the further use of visual images from a sociological perspective. However his collection of data and their presentation are pre-determined by certain assumptions about gender roles and gender inequality in society and based on simplified men - women , adults - children binary oppositions, around which interpretation of a given visual image is developed. In this sense, Goffman's illustration of the power relationship between men and women, and adults (parents) - children has its starting point in background knowledge about gender role in a society (in Goffman's case, it is that of Western society), into which visual descriptions are fitted.

Goffman's study of advertisements is unique in the sense that he is concerned exclusively with the visual representation of the structure of society in terms of gender role, rather than commercial aspects of advertisements, although it is inevitable that he will take the ideological meaning of those advertisements into account for the full understanding of the meaning of certain visual representations. Further important point of Goffman's study is the fact that it demonstrates that visual data can offer the basis of sociological research, that could not have been carried out in the same way using only

verbal data.

Goffman uses an extensive range of photographic images in advertisements. Dingwall et al (1991) by contrast, focus exclusively on four visual images, three of which are taken from Japanese parenthood literature, the other being their British equivalent. Their aim is to explore how the concept of parenthood is visualised in the cultural value systems of Japan and Britain. Central to their argument in terms of cultural difference in visual representation of parenthood is their recognition of different modes through which visual images are conveyed. They argue that Japanese examples are more likely to use cartoon drawings (for the depiction of parents and a baby) instead of photographic images, which is rarely the case in British examples. They apply their findings to a broader cultural comparison: the use of cartoon drawing in Japanese examples represents Japanese parents and their babies as more general figures, and the use of photographic images in British examples indicates individual differences. Japanese examples emphasise a sense of 'collectiveness': an individual within the society as opposed to the British emphasis on 'individuality'. This study is particularly valuable as it draws attention to cultural values through the use of visual representations.

Dingwall et al also point out that the visual data illustrates the difference in the degree of parental participation in childbirth. In Japanese examples, childbirth is visually represented as an "exclusively female experience[9]" (Ibid:438), where the role of men is marginalised, although there is a difference in the degree of male participation between official and private literature: private sources are more likely to "give much more

[9] One Japanese example shows a cartoon image of a pregnant woman, who is given a lecture on the development of the embryo by a medical doctor (also a cartoon image; a male and elderly). Dingwall et al points out "the submissive posture of the woman, with her head turned and eyes cast down while the older man speaks (435)", which represents a woman's position in front of authority (represented by the man).

prominence to fathers" (Ibid:436). On the other hand, British examples represent childbirth as an event in which both men and women are involved. A British example also shows the very moment of birth clearly using a photographic image. This is not the case in the Japanese example:

> Part of the reason for the lack of graphic photographs of childbirth, for example, is likely to be the extent to which these would impinge on national sensibilities about the relationship between the natural and the cultural (442).

Thus what is not accepted in a culture when depicted visually may be represented in writing. This suggests that the choice of semiotic mode is determined by cultural values.

This sociological research of visual representations carried out by Dingwall et al not only confirms the validity and use of photographic images that Goffman (1979) already illustrated but also the significance of the choice of the type of visual representation (such as photographic as opposed to cartoon images) and the choice between two different modes of communication (the visual and the verbal), which is closely related to the underlying cultural value systems.

2.2.4 Cultural approaches to visual images

In this section, I will draw attention to studies that focus on cultural aspect of visual images, with particular reference to studies of visual images in advertisements. As Dyer (1982:13) says "The advertiser employs language, image, ideas and values drawn from the culture, and assembles a message which is fed back into the culture. Both communicator and receiver are products of the culture, they share its meaning". On the grounds that, given Dyer's point, advertisements are cultural products, I will explore the way in which visual images in advertisements have been treated in previous studies.

2.2.4.1 Visual images as cultural products

Berger (1972) argues that some of the contemporary visual images such as advertisements ('publicity' in Berger's term) make reference to traditional art works such as paintings and sculptures which are considered as canonical. Values that these canonical works carry are transferred to another type of visual representations (e.g. advertisements) and are used in a different context from that in which these works were originally produced.[10] In this respect, the transformation of the value of art works to advertisements are to "sell the past to the future" (Ibid:139).

Berger points out examples of the use of canonical visual images in advertisements (Ibid: 138):

> The gestures of models (mannequins) and mythological figures.
> The romantic use of nature (leaves, trees, water) to create a place where innocence can be refound.
> The poses taken up to denote stereotypes of women: serene mother (Madonna), free-wheeling secretary (actress, king's mistress), perfect hostess (spectator-owner's wife), sex-object (Venus, nymph surprised), etc.

Berger focuses on the connection between visual images in advertisements and their reference to canonical art works in Western cultures. These diachronic views of different types of visual representations ("publicity" and art works), each of which is produced under different socio-cultural contexts, shares the same ground with iconographic approaches to visual images (Panofsky, 1972; Gombrich, 1984).

While Berger considers contemporary visual representations such as advertisements particularly in relation to traditional works of art, Fowles (1996) and Messaris (1997) focus on visual images in advertisements from a different angle: visual images in relation to the value systems of contemporary culture.

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[10] Berger says that traditional works of art are aimed at what he calls "spectator-owners", while "publicity" is for "spectator-buyers"

Fowles points out a tendency of contemporary American advertisements namely that they make frequent use of the "solitary human": the depiction of a lone man or a woman in advertisements, in relation to its cultural value:

> The solitary human is the most prevalent image in American advertising, one that addresses these times' most insistent personal concern: the development of a sure self-identity (200).

Fowles says that visual images in advertisements also have references to culturally accepted or acknowledged gender roles (in this case those of the United States). Women tend to be depicted "indoors protected", and less active than the depiction of men. Men are often "active" and "more likely on their feet".

Fowles's argument about visual depiction has something in common with Goffman's study on gender display in advertisements (1979) in that both attempt to 'read' gender roles in visual images. Fowles is less concerned with the formal categorisation of depicted visual participants than Goffman. For Fowles, it is visual lexis rather than visual syntax that matters: who is depicted in what kind of environment rather than who is depicted in relation to others and how this constructs the formal structure of the visual.

Messaris (1997), unlike Fowles, who focuses on the relationship between contemporary American cultural value systems and visual representations in advertisements, puts an emphasis on the cross-cultural issue of visual representations: "Can pictures bridge cultures?"

> Does the iconicity of visual communication make it a vehicle for the sharing of meaning between people who are separated by linguistic or cultural differences? There are at least two aspects of advertising to which these questions are directly relevant. To begin with, because of the growing globalization of economic activity, commercial advertising is increasingly to a variety of linguistic and cultural communities....[the second aspect is concerned with] beyond the commercial applications of visual communication. Because of their ability to simulate a direct encounter with other people and places, visual images have often been used in deliberate attempts to foster cross-cultural understanding

(Ibid:90-91).

Messaris (1997) is concerned with the persuasive functions of advertisements, which is exemplified in the use of visual images: "what is the distinctive contribution that visual images make to persuasive communication?; "What are the fundamental characteristics that distinguish visual images from other modes of communication?". Most notably, he draws attention to the significance of cultural specificness in persuasive functions of advertisements; referring to the difference in the interpretation of visual representations, he suggests that this depends on how the viewer is culturally conditioned. Messaris argues that a cultural context in which certain visual images are produced and cultural knowledge of the viewer are crucial to the understanding the message of visual images in advertisements.

As examples that show the culture-bound aspect of visual representation, Messaris refers to a printed advertisement for a film called *Spring Break* that is a parody of the Iwo Jima battle between the United States and Japan during the second world war and a Cutty Sark whisky advertisement that depicts a close interaction between a father and his son. In an interpretation of the *Spring Break* advertisement, cultural and historical knowledge of the viewer is required for a full understanding of the advertiser's intention. Messaris argues that the depiction of a close (friend-like) father-son relationship, as is seen in the Cutty Sark whisky advertisement, does not necessarily represent universal cultural value, but "the conventions of pictorial representation are culture-bound (Ibid:92)"[11].

Although Messaris's analysis of visual representation does not go beyond the level of visual lexis (that is what and who is depicted in relation to a cultural context) and how

[11] Messaris reports that Chinese students reacted towards the display of a close, friendly relationship between a father and a son as culturally 'marked', while to American students, it is accepted as 'cultural norm'.

each visual element is semantically related[12], his discussion of these advertisements illustrates how visual images can manifest culturally determined values and it presents a counter-argument for the cultural 'transparency' of visual communication.

Moeran (1991, 1996) closely examines visual images in advertisements as a representation of cultural stereotypes, with particular reference to Japanese culture and its visual representation within a Western context. Moeran's (1991) analysis of visual images have a reference point in Said's notion of *Orientalism* (1972), and Moeran points out some traces of 'orientalist discourse'[13] in the way in which these visual images construct a certain Japaneseness. As examples, Moeran argues that these visual images often emphasise: physical smallness of oriental people in comparison to Westerners; their 'primitive' culture in contrast to 'advanced' and 'civilised' culture in the West; 'emotional' and 'sentimental' mentality as opposed to Westerner's 'rational' way of thinking; the use of 'incomprehensible' languages, mainly due to their writing systems which are different from the ones that use the Roman alphabet; different religious, philosophical and ethical value systems from those in Western cultures.

Moeran demonstrates, by referring particularly to visual images in Japanese advertisements, how far these conventionalised 'Orientalist discourses' have been going through change because of contemporary political economic power relationships between Japan and the West. With the economic growth of Japan after the World War II, Moeran argues that there is a phenomenon that he names "Counter-Orientalism" which is

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[12] Messaris points out four type of relationships in which one visual element is connected to another: *Causal connections; Contrasts; Analogies; Generalisation.*

[13] Moeran argues that there have been a number of British advertisements which visualise negative concepts towards not just Japan but also to the cultural domain called 'the Orient'. Moeran claims that these cultural stereotypes are not unrelated to the age-old notion about the Orient in general set by Orientalists ('Orientalist discourse').

represented in visual images in contemporary Japanese advertisements, as one of the manifestations of a backlash against existing Orientalist discourse. Moeran uses this term that describes the dynamic of a Japanese way of dealing with conventionally negative concepts about Japanese people, culture and society, which is, he argues, a counter-product in response to Orientalism.

The discourse of "Counter-orientalism", which Moeran believes originates in the time of *Japonisme*[14] in the late nineteenth century, "makes use of essentially negative orientalist ideas, turns them into positive images, and throws them back at the West" (Moeran 1991:12). For instance, physical smallness can be transformed into a positive trait in products with 'compactness' or 'easy to carry', as is often seen in visual images in Japanese advertisements for cars, camera and hi-fi sets (c.f. *Minolta Camera* advertisement, Figure 6-2).

Moeran's approach has strength in that it views visual images in terms of the ideological manifestation of a given culture. The visualisation of culture is determined by ideology; visual images are therefore never the result of 'natural' processes, but motivated by social relations of their producers. Moeran (1996) focuses specifically on the way in which a visual context in which a given commodity is placed makes use of representations of Japanese culture. One example is a Japanese car advertisement for European viewers, which shows a commodity (a car) placed in the middle of a *Zen* garden. Moeran argues that this well-raked *Zen* garden is used for the advertiser to realise a sense of 'perfect achievement' not only technologically but also aesthetically.

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[14] In the late nineteenth century, French impressionists like Monet, Degas, Bonnard and Gogh were influenced mainly by Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints by Japanese artists such as Hokusai, Hiroshige and Utamaro.

In comparison to this Toyota advertisement Moeran draws in an advertisement for Mercedes-Benz aimed at the Japanese viewer, which depicts a car parked in front of an old Japanese house with a thatched roof. Moeran argues that the use of the visual context that represents one aspect of Japanese culture maintains the notions of Orientalism:

> By focusing on 'traditional' aspects of Japanese architecture - thatched roof, a wooden construction, noren - the visual portrays Japan as 'traditional', rather than modern....we could say that it is *European* industry which is on the move, Western manufacturing which is ahead (1996:48-49)

Moeran's analysis of visual images from cultural and ideological perspectives is particularly useful when a cross-cultural aspect of visual representations is at issue. There is a risk, however, that the reading of a given visual element is rather rigidly determined by pre-established ideological meanings of Orientalism or Counter-orientalism. In other words, Moeran's approach requires a 'fit' between particular types of visual representations and his cultural and ideological categorisation. Another characteristic of Moeran's analysis of visual images in these advertisements is its emphasis on visual lexis: *What* is depicted in relation to its cultural implication, rather than the way in which visual images are formally or syntactically related to each other and what this says about a given culture.

2.2.4.2 Visual images from linguistic perspectives

In this section I will focus on studies of visual images that make use of linguistic theories: Those who directly apply linguistic categories to the reading of visual images (Forceville, 1996; O'Toole, 1994[15]); those who deal primarily with language and treat visual images secondary but within linguistic domain (Tanaka, 1994; Vestergaard and

[15]For a detailed discussion of O'Toole (1994), see section ***2.2.5.3***

Schroder, 1985; Cook, 1992; Myers, 1994).

Forceville (1996) discusses the use of visual images in advertisements by applying the notion of verbal metaphor. Central to his analysis of these visual images is the verbalisation of what he calls "pictorial metaphor". Forceville verbalises a given visual image in advertisement in the form of metaphor. For example, a metaphoric expression like "Sweetcorn seeds are wine" can be extracted from the visual images that show seeds of sweetcorn in a wine glass. Forceville analyses a visual image of Grolsch beer placed in a wine cooler in the form of metaphoric expression, "Grolsch beer is white wine".

Forceville claims that these are examples of pictorial metaphor that encourage the viewer of the advertisement to understand sweetcorn seeds or beer in terms of other drinks: (white) wine. He also points out that in order for these pictorial metaphors to work (that is to give sweetcorn or beer a different and higher value than they usually have), specific cultural background knowledge is required.

Forceville's account of pictorial metaphor is useful in that it provides a tool for understanding meaning construction of visual images in a systematic way, but the fact that his approach sets the reading of visual images in terms of verbal metaphors might overlook the meaning potential of visual images that exist outside of a linguistic framework.

While Forceville focuses on visual images as the primary concern, even though his analysis of visuals is heavily based on a linguistic framework, Tanaka (1994) draws attention to visual images as mere illustration that reinforces the meaning of language. Tanaka's account of the way in which a verbal 'pun' works[16] in advertisements, however,

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[16]Tanaka discusses a holiday campaign by a Japanese airline (ANA), where the name of the holiday site ('Okinawa') is used as a pan word that connects a verbal copy ('O-kina-wa!') and what is visually depicted (a female model).

shows that understanding 'verbal' puns is inevitably dependent on the understanding of visual images. It is problematic, however, because Tanaka reduces the work of visual images in advertisements to "a contextual effect" that helps to understand verbal copy; in my view, visual images play a role of more than just a context or background to verbal elements in advertisements.

Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) also discuss visual images in advertisements in the form of an 'illustration to language', rather than treating them as autonomous entities that contribute to the overall meaning of a given advertisement. The overall account and role of visual images in advertisements in their analysis are reduced to that of an 'illustration' that accompanies the verbal copy: visual images are a secondary concern after language.

Cook's study of advertisements (1992) takes a wider scope than that of Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) in that it covers not only language (which is the primary concern of his work) but also other modes such as the visual, music, action and sound. Cook emphasises the significance of the combination of different modes for the whole meaning of a given advertisement. Cook calls language (linguistic elements) in advertisements 'text' and puts 'pictures' (visual images) under the category of what he calls 'Material'. With respect to linguistic elements in advertisements, Cook compares the language of advertisements with that of canonical literature and demonstrates how the language of advertising copy has references to the language used in literary work.[17]

Cook's interpretation of pictorial representations are carried out at the level of 'symbolism', where, for example, he discusses a Wrigley's chewing gum advertisement in terms of the type of shot in relation to social meaning. He demonstrates how the use

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[17]Cook's comparison of advertising copy with the language of literary work can be seen in parallel to Berger's argument (1972) that compares visual images used in advertisements with canonical paintings (see section ***2.2.4.1***)

of a particular shot[18] visualises the individual within the social context, which is set in a 'natural environment'. In Cook's interpretation, the choice of shot therefore functions as a sign that realises "the harmony between the natural world and human" (1992:52).

Myers (1994), like Cook (1992), deals with advertisements; Myers' focus is more explicitly on language than in Cook (Ibid). Most of his work is devoted to the discussion of the way in which language works in advertisements, Myers also draws on the treatment of visual images in connection to language, rather than as a separate entity (1994:135-151). There, Myers argues for the specific and different status of visual images ('pictures' in his term) in advertisements and their impact upon meaning making on the part of the viewer:

> Both these reasons for using visuals - pictures do not lie, pictures are non-rational - treat the audience as passive....I would suggest a third reason for the dominance of pictures. Pictures involve the audience in constructing for themselves a range of messages. The relationship of picture to text is never simply one of illustration, never simply a supplement to make the ad look prettier or more informative. Even in the most banal ad, with a claim and a picture of the product package, the picture leads us off in a number of different directions (1994:136)

There are other problems with the propositions that "pictures do not lie" and "pictures are non-rational", not just in relation to the point that they assume a passive audience. For visual images *can* lie (Sontag, 1979; Barthes 1984), and to treat visual images as non-rational has an implication: language as rational as opposed to visual images. In my view, whether or not visual images and language are are not rational matters, neither language nor visual images are a transparent medium of communication in the sense that meanings, whether they are mediated through language or visual images, "leads us off

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[18]Cook analyses shots of a television commercial of Wrigley's chewing gum, which shows the encounter of a young man and woman on a bus that is going through a road in the middle of a barley field in the country side.

in a number of different directions".

Myers' way of looking at visual images can be viewed as parallel to linguistic aspects such as "foregrounding and deviation", "sentences" and "an attitude, a point of view, and a form of address". In short, Myers has transformed these linguistic concepts into the domain of visual images for the reading of them:

> As we looked first at foregrounding and deviation in language, let us look at how things stand out in pictures. As we looked at structure in sentences, we can look at framing and composition in pictures. As texts suggest an attitude, a point of view, and a form of address, so can pictures. And as words play with meanings and associations, so can pictures.

The homology of stylistic device in language with the structure and function of visual images are worth noting, and viewing visual images from a linguistic perspective gives a sense of systematicness in their analysis. However, it tends to overlook quintessential features that are distributed exclusively by the visual mode of representation. This leads to a language centred way of looking at visual images, which results in the treatment of the visual mode of communication as a secondary entity of semiosis rather than an entity in its own right.

2.2.5 Semiotic approaches to visual images

2.2.5.1 Saussure, Barthes (Traditional semiology/semiotics)

Saussure (1974) considered the *sign* as composed of a *signifier* and a *signified.* Saussure used this concept of sign in order to explain the semiotics of language. He argued that language is one example of sign systems, which he calls 'semiology':

> Language is a system of signs that expresses ideas, and is therefore comparable to a system of writing, the alphabet of deaf-mutes, symbolic rites, polite formulas, military signals, etc. But it is the most important of these systems. A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable; it would be part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology; I shall

> call it semiology. Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them. Since the science does not yet exist, no one can say what it would be; but it has a right to existence a place staked out in advance. Linguistics is only a part of the general science of semiology; the laws discovered by semiology will be applicable to linguistics, and the latter will circumscribe a well-defined area within the mass of anthropological facts (Saussure 1974:16).

According to Saussure, therefore, language is a system of signs , which are combinations of form (as *the signifier*) and meaning (as *the signified*). What is characteristic about his notion of signs is that he considers that the relationship between these two components is arbitrary, unmotivated and conventional.

Saussure's semiology has linguistics as a starting point of his study of sign systems. From there, it is possible to explore other semiotic modes, such as the visual, not as the secondary or subordinate mode to language but as autonomous components of semiosis in general. Therefore, this signifier-signified concept of signs can be applied to any system of signs such as the analysis of advertisements (Barthes, 1978; Williamson, 1972), films (Metz, 1974, 1968), paintings (O'Toole, 1994) on the grounds that they are considered "assemblages of signs" (Smith and Ball, 1992).

Roland Barthes applied the Saussurean notion of signs to non-linguistic texts, including the reading of advertisements (1978). Barthes points out the validity of advertisements as data for semiotic analysis:

> Because in advertising the signification of the image is undoubtedly intentional; the signifieds of the advertising message are formed *a priori* by certain attributes of the product and these signifieds have to be transmitted as clearly as possible. If the image contains signs, we can be sure that in advertising these signs are full, formed with a view to the optimum reading: advertising image is *frank*, or at least emphatic (1978:33).

In his early studies (1964, 1967) Barthes considers that the visual mode is always subordinate to the linguistic mode, and that the pictorial message can only be interpreted

with the help of semiotic relations like 'anchorage' and 'relay'. In the case of 'anchorage', the interpretation of pictures are dependent on words, and 'relay' can be best explained with the example of a cartoon, where both words and pictures function complementarily for the overall understanding of a given text:

> It is true that objects, images and patterns of behaviour can signify, and do so on a large scale, but never autonomously; every semiological system has its linguistic admixture. Where there is a visual substance, for example, the meaning is confirmed by being duplicated in a linguistic message (which happens in the case of the cinema advertising, comic strips, press photography etc.) So that at least a part of the iconic message is in terms of structural relationship, either redundant or taken up by the linguistic system (Barthes 1964:10)

Barthes' stance here can be labelled as 'logocentric' in the sense that it proposes that semiotic meaning can only be carried by the mediation of language, by those who believe in the autonomous function of each semiotic mode on its own right (Hervey 1982).

In relation to the status of visual images in an advertising text (1977), Barthes argues that visual images are "polysemous" and language is one of the "techniques" to " fix the floating chain of signifieds", some of which the reader (or the viewer) of a given text can choose to ignore (1977:39).

One point Barthes misses here is that language as well as visual images can be polysemous, depending on the context in which it is placed. To 'fix' language as a definite landmark to which the meaning of visual images are all reduced is therefore to make language the only means of understanding the kind of texts that consist of both language and visual images.

Barthes' analysis of an Italian advertisement of *Panzani* spaghetti (1977) focuses on three different levels of message realised both by language and visual images: a linguistic message; a coded iconic message; a non-iconic message. The linguistic message consists

of two aspects: denotational meaning and connotational meaning[19]. The former functions as the signifier and the latter as the signified, as Barthes puts, "the sign *Panzani* gives not simply the name of the firm but also, by its assonance, an additional signified, that of 'Italianicity'" (1977:33).

In relation to the messages conveyed by visual images, Barthes divides them into two categories: a coded iconic message and a non-coded iconic message. The former can be paraphrased as 'denoted' image and the latter as 'connoted' image. In the Panzani advertisement, Barthes draws attention to photographed objects as one type of visual image: what is photographed (such as Mediterranean vegetables, pasta) functions on two different levels. To Barthes (1977), photographic objects themselves form a non-coded message, which forms a contrast with the drawing which "even when denoted, is a coded message":

> The photograph, message without a code, must thus be opposed to drawing which even when denoted, is a coded message. The coded nature of drawing can be seen at three levels. Firstly, to reproduce an object or a scene in a drawing requires a set of *rule-governed* transpositions; there is no essential nature of the pictorial copy and the codes of transposition are historical (notably those concerning perspective). Secondly, the operation of the drawing (the coding) immediately necessitates a certain division between the significant and the insignificant: the drawing does not reproduce *everything* (often it reproduces very little), without its ceasing, however, to be a strong message; whereas the photograph, although it can choose its subject, its point of view and its angle, cannot intervene *within* the object (except by trick effects). In other words, the denotation of the drawing is less pure than that of the photograph, for there is no drawing without style (1964 in 1977:43).

However, it has to be noted that there is a shift in Barthes' stance towards the idea of photographic images as non-coded messages in his later work *Camera Lucida* (1980). There Barthes takes the opposite view from his earlier version (1964), arguing that

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[19] This notion of *denotation* and *connotation* was originally introduced by the Danish linguist Louis Hjelmslev (1943). Barthes' first-order signification is related to denotation, and the second-order signification is to connotation.

photographic meaning is 'social and coded: studium' (Kress and van Leeuwen 1992).

Barthes sees visual images as signs and this allows them to be split up into two components: the signifier and the signified. He questions himself, "The linguistic message can be easily separated from the other but the latter [iconic messages: coded and non-coded] share the same (iconic) substance, to what extent have we right to separate them?".

For example, Barthes (1973) in *Myth Today* uses the example of the rose to exemplify this point: the rose as the signifier (roses as flowers as material objects) does not itself convey any 'signification' but together with what they signify ('romance' or 'passion' according to Western cultures as Barthes argues), the rose functions as a sign, and has meaning. In my view, Barthes' concept of the signifier and the signified as a binary structure, in which the signifier which is an entity free-of-meaning, as he argues that "the signifier is empty" (Ibid:113), is implausible in that the meaning of the sign 'roses' is attributed not only to the signified (according to Barthes, the entity that conveys the meaning) but also to the signifier. In other words, the signifier is not an entity free of meaning; the signifier itself conveys the signification of the sign 'roses'.

The manipulation of sign making is the main concern of Judith Williamson's semiotic analysis of visual images using advertisements, *Decoding Advertisements* (1978). As the title indicates, Williamson explores the way signs are constructed and how they operate in order to manifest commercial impact (and their ideology) in visual images of advertisements. One of the many examples she draws on is an advertisement for Chanel No.5 perfume. There is an image of the actress Catherine Deneuve as the signifier that signifies and conveys a sense of 'French chic'.

There is a problem here: 'How can we (the viewer) reach this 'decoding' when there

is nothing in the visual image that explicitly tells the viewer Catherine Deneuve is supposed to signify French chic? In other words, where the 'formula', ('referent system' in Williamson's term) "Catherine Deneuve is a symbol of French chic", does not exist, the reading cannot be the same; so reading depends on how far one is culturally informed or is aware of the 'meaning' of the French actress, to the extent to which the viewer knows the meaning of the signifier.

Both Barthes' (1977) *Panzani* advertisement and Williamson's (1978) accounts of visual images in advertisements (1977) do not refer to the possibility of varied subjectivities in the readership: how those visual images are read depending on who reads them. In particular, Barthes' analysis of the *Panzani* advertisement does not take account of the social interaction aspect of visual representations: the relationship between the advertisement and the viewer in a socio-cultural context. Social interaction in visual representations constitutes one of the main aspects in this thesis.

2.2.5.2 Film semiotics

Apart from advertisements, visual images in film have received much attention; for instance from scholars like Metz (1974, 1977, 1982), Bordwell (1983), Heath (1983), Barthes (1977) and Eco (1977). Among them, Metz (1974) was the first to attempt to explore the way in which film narrative is constructed in the light of Saussurean linguistics and semiology.

The central issue for Metz (1974) lies in the question: 'Does cinema function as a language?'. Metz's stance is equivocal: he is "critical of the assumption of language-cinema homology" (Lapsley and Westlake 1992:59), but at the same time he recognises the importance of the linguistic approach, more precisely, what he calls, 'translinguistics'

(Ibid: 84):

> By initially casting light on what the cinema is not, and thanks to its analysis of language systems, linguistics- and especially that part of it which leads to translinguistics (semiotics)- gradually allows us to glimpse what the cinema is.

This application that the notion of signs is relevant to the study of film discourse is characteristic of film semiotics. To Metz, in the sign system in filmic discourse, the filmic signifier is the image [visual images] and its signifier is "what the image represents" (1974:62).

While denying or being equivocal about the connection between language and film, Metz cannot escape referring back to linguistic categories in order to explain the "grammar of film". This has to do with the way in which his use of semiotics emerged in relation to linguistics, which is indebted greatly to Saussure, as Metz points out (Ibid:60):

> In theory, linguistics is only a branch of semiotics, but in fact semiotics was created from linguistics. In a way it is very normal: For the most part semiotics remains to be done, whereas linguistics is already well advanced.

Metz makes use of linguistic categories for the account of a constituency of the film: a shot. For example, Metz argues that the shot is "the smallest unit of filmic *signification*" (Ibid:106) and can be compared to a statement rather than a word. Still, he does not fail to emphasise the difference between language and film:

> The filmic "shot" therefore resembles the statement rather than the word. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to say that it is equivalent to the statement. For there are still great differences between the shot and the linguistic statement. Even the most complex statement is reducible, in the final analysis, to discrete elements (words, morphemes, phonemes, relevant features), which are fixed in number and in nature (Ibid:116).

That the meaning is "not provided by paradigmatic contrasts" (Lapsley and Westlake Ibid:39) is where filmic signification is different from linguistic signification. It is not

a paradigmatic choice but a syntagmatic sequence that constructs filmic signification, that is, "The shot is the smallest unit of the filmic chain; the sequence is a great syntagmatic whole" (Ibid:67), "a sort of coherent *syntagma* within which the "shots" react (semantically) to each other" (Ibid:115). Maintaining that meaning formation in films is syntagmatic rather than paradigmatic, Metz considers that there are "paradigms of syntagmas" (Ibid:137).

Metz in his later work *The Imaginary Signifier* (1982) changes his focus towards psychoanalytic interpretation of film, still maintaining the use of a semiotic concept of signification. He draws on Lacan's (1968, 1980) concept of the *symbol* which forms a triad of 'the real', 'the imaginary' and 'the symbolic'[20]. The account of human feelings, desire and perception involving film making and watching[21] are rooted in a Freudian framework, first proposed by Freud in *The Interpretations of Dreams* (1973). It can be argued that Metz's semiotic psychoanalytical mode is not culturally sensitive in that his arguments are based on too general a proposition about the signification systems and they leave very little room for explaining filmic signification in a cross-cultural or inter-cultural context.

2.2.5.3 Social semiotics

Social semiotics, which is proposed by Hodge and Kress (1988), and has its application to visual images in Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996) takes a number of different

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[20]The real is a sphere of primitive, inexpressible experience. The imaginary is the realm of images, mirrors, and specular identification. The order of the symbolic is the order of language and visual signs (Noth 1995:116)

[21]This includes the concept of 'dream', 'fantasy', 'voyeurism' and 'fetishism', together with the workings of metaphor and metonymy in film.

stances from 'traditional' semiotic approaches (like Saussure, Barthes and Williamson) in terms of the consideration of meaning making in a given text. As the name indicates, it takes the notion of human semiosis as fundamentally social, which Hodge and Kress (1988) and Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996) view is central to the meaning making of signs. Although social semiotics shares common ground with traditional semiotics in that the sign system takes the primary concern of arguments, Social Semiotics puts more emphasis on the actual 'making' process of various sign systems, rather than treating signs as fixed and static systems which remain the same, regardless of socio-cultural conditioning:

> 'Mainstream semiotics' [that of Saussure and Barthes] emphasises structures and codes, at the expense of functions and social uses of semiotic systems, the complex interrelations of semiotic systems in social practice, all of the factors which provide their motivation, their origins and destinations, their form and substance. It stresses system and product, rather than speakers and writers or other participants in semiotic activity as connected and Inter*acting* in a variety of ways in concrete social contexts (Hodge and Kress Ibid:1)

The notion of Hodge, Kress and van Leeuwen's social semiotics takes the Hallidayan metafunctions (Halliday, 1978, 1985), the *Ideational, Interpersonal* and *Textual*, as one of its basic premises.

Kress and van Leeuwen's (1990, 1996) approach to visual images has in common with Saussurean and Barthean semiotics that signs are considered as a unit of meaning. What then makes social semiotics different from "mainstream semiotics" lies in the following points. First of all, while Kress and van Leeuwen are interested in the form-content relationship (*the signifier signified* relationship in semiotic terms), they do not treat signs as a fixed, intrinsic, simply two-layered components, but understand them as part of a discursive socio-cultural practice. The meaning of signs to Kress and van

Leeuwen is a dynamic mechanism or 'process' of meaning making, rather than the production or use of static, completed 'products', which are considered to be what Saussure variously calls, 'conventions', 'collective habits' or 'the rules'. They are initially determined socially, in other words, are socially and individually 'motivated'.

Secondly, Kress and van Leeuwen's treatment of signs as a 'dynamic process' is not unrelated to their emphasis on human subjects as 'actors' or 'doers', rather than as 'objects'. They view the human as an 'agent', who is influenced and determined by the socio-cultural contexts he or she is situated in, and at the same time, who is responsible for meaning making within a given socio-cultural environment.

Thirdly, this stance (the recognition of human subject as the agent) also allows given texts to be 'read' in the light of different subjectivities. This can be useful for understanding texts in cross-cultural environments, where it is required to consider multiple subjectivities depending on one's socio-cultural background. In this respect, Kress and van Leeuwen's social semiotic approach to visual images can widen the scope and potentiality for the further understanding of the meaning making mechanism of visual representations in different cultures.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996) take up various visual representations, ranging from children's drawings, traditional art works, school textbooks and advertisements for the analysis of sign systems from a syntactical point of view. The strength of their studies lies in the fact that the functional-based framework (based on Halliday's three meta functions in human communication) can be applied to a wide range of visual images. What Kress and van Leeuwen call 'visual grammar' allows the analyst to look at various visual images in a systematic way.

For example, Kress and van Leeuwen draw on religious paintings from the middle

ages in Europe in order to demonstrate how the visual domain of left and right, top and bottom function. They argue that this approach has continuing and immediate relevance in the context of contemporary visual representations. In this sense, their study is diachronic and their findings shows how consistently 'visual grammar' has been operating over time in the visual semiotics of Western cultures.

Another strength of Kress and van Leeuwen's viewpoints is that they are aware that "visual language is not transparent and universally understood, but culturally specific" (1996:3), although in fact they notably cover visual representations in Western cultures. However, they ask the question how far their work will "provide some ideas and concepts for the study of visual communication in non-Western forms of visual communication". This issue of cultural specificity of visual semiotics is relevant to a cross-cultural analysis of visual representations. Given that, as Halliday argues, the three metafunctions are relevant to all human communication, the extension of Kress and van Leeuwen's scope into non-Western or a cross-cultural context has profound implications in this field of study.

The fourth point that makes Kress and van Leeuwen's approach to visual images (1990, 1996) unique consists in its relevance to a theory of language: Systemic Functional grammar (Halliday 1978, 1985)[22]. While Saussurean semiotics places linguistics as a starting point from which its core concept (signs as the combination of the signifier and signified) is developed, and while Barthes treats language as the dominant and primary in all the semiotic phenomena, Kress and van Leeuwen's description of visual representations allows the juxtaposition of an analysis of language, treating

[22] Michael O'Toole (1994) also bases his analysis of visual representations on Halliday's Systemic Functional grammar.

language as *one* of the semiotic modes of communication, with an analysis of visual images. This leads to the consideration of the interrelations between different semiotic modes.

O'Toole (1994) applies a semiotic approach to various art objects such as architecture, sculpture and paintings. His analytical framework is based on the three metafunctions in language described by Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday, 1978, 1985). Like Hodge and Kress (1988) and Kress and van Leeuwen (1990,1996), O'Toole uses the term 'social semiotic' for a visual account of architecture, sculpture and paintings. It should be pointed out that there is a difference in the use of 'social semiotic' between O'Toole and Hodge, Kress and van Leeuwen.

In relation to the analysis of visual images, both O'Toole (1994) and Kress and van Leeuwen (1990,1996) make use of Halliday's systemic functional grammar as a reference point, but O'Toole uses it differently from them. O'Toole's approach to the reading of visual images is an attempt to seek a visual equivalent within the linguistic domain. In short, O'Toole seeks to find quasi-linguistic functions in the way visual images are constructed. His approach, therefore, is a language-oriented way of looking at visual images. Kress and van Leeuwen (1990,1996), treat Halliday's three metafunctions in a broader context of semiotics, instead of just linguistic context: the metafunctions as something common in all forms of human communication. This stance leaves language as one of the semiotic modes that constitute human communication, rather than the dominant mode of communication.

O'Toole uses the concept of 'register' (Halliday 1978) to connect micro-level analysis (what he calls "textual meaning") of visual images in paintings to a macro-level analysis, "the larger concerns of art history and social history" (O'Toole, 1994:217). To O'Toole,

where "the larger concerns" come to matter, there is a 'social semiotic' at work. In this respect, O'Toole recognises "textual meaning" as a separate, or at least separable, unit from meaning after taking social and cultural contexts into consideration.

This is not compatible with the stance of Kress and van Leeuwen (1990,1996) and Hodge and Kress (1988), in terms of the conceptualisation of 'social semiotics'. To them, there is no possibility of separating the "textual meaning" from "social meaning", because any text itself is already a realisation of social and cultural practices. Texts, whether in language or visual image, are always filled with meanings that are products of a given social and cultural context.

2.2.6 Reflections on the literature survey

So far I have outlined literature that I consider particularly relevant to my investigation of visual communication. I have not dealt with other approaches to visual images, such as the strictly psychological (Gibson, 1986) because they are far from the scope of this thesis; my emphasis lies in the exploration of visual images using social semiotic theory. Visual images can be observed from different perspectives and across different disciplines. I now want to review this literature in relation to the purpose of my research and to consider its relevance in the light of the theoretical framework for my textual analysis.

In the area of art history and its theories as a method of looking at visual images, Panofsky's iconographic approach (1972) is significant and relevant to my study. For, Iconography, the study of subject matter with reference to certain visual elements can be considered with the notion of visual lexis. That is, iconography provides lexical meaning of given visual images. The iconographic approach plays an important role in that it

offers the possibility for an underlying message that requires a particular cultural reference. The iconography enables one to read and understand the meaning of given images with the help of cultural knowledge which otherwise prevents a full interpretation of the work.

While Panofsky's approach is content oriented, Arnheim's studies that explore forms in art works (1969, 1974, 1988) provide a different perspective to look at visual images: they are form oriented. Arnheim explores the way in which forms in visual images operate from the viewpoint of human perception; in this he shares the same basis as Gombrich's studies (1960, 1982), which is also concerned with human cognitive science and psychology. The approaches of Arnheim and Gombrich are relevant to my study of visual syntax in that both draw attention to the 'form' of visual images. I take from them that visual forms (such as visual structures and compositions) are meaningful as well as the content. The perspective of psychology of visual perception, however, is not my concern; I am more interested in social aspects of understanding or reading (not 'perception') of visual images.

Understanding visual representations in terms of sociological and cultural aspects, in other words, positioning a visual representation in a certain social context is more to my interest because I believe that the formation of visual images as well as the reading of them cannot escape sociological and cultural conditioning. Goffman (1979), Dingwall et al (1991), and Moeran (1991) have successfully demonstrated that visual representations embody the value systems of a society and culture.

The approach to visual images by Dingwall et al, in particular, is highly relevant to the purpose of my research: they compare the way in which Japanese and British visual images realise cultural values around child birth, and their project illustrates a valid use

of visual representations for the exploration of value systems across different cultures. Another relevant point lies in that Dingwall et al's study draws on cultural specificness in the choice of representational modes; what is 'expected to be visualised' and what is expected to be verbalised and its relationship with cultural value systems. A more systematic theoretical framework for analysis of visual images would help the researcher to deal with other types of literature.

Moeran's study (1991) has a solid reference point: Orientalism (Said, 1978). His interpretation of Said's orientalism and the specific application to Japanese advertisements are a unique approach in the sense that he combined ideological concepts with the actual visual representations that are present in everyday life contexts.

Some studies focus exclusively on the way in which language works when they are in fact dealing with 'texts' (such as advertisements) that are composed not only of language but also of visual images (Leech, 1966; Vestergaard and Schroder, 1985; Myers, 1994; Tanaka, 1994). There is little mention of visual images, rather they undertake an exclusively linguistic account in these studies. They lack a discussion of visual images when images are a central aspect of the texts, and this is, therefore, only a partial analysis.

Other studies (Forceville, 1996; O'Toole, 1994) have based their analysis of visual images on linguistic frameworks: Forceville's account of visual images in advertisements (1996) are related to the principle of verbal metaphors and O'Toole (1994) set up his theoretical framework solidly using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. A film theorist, a scholar such as Metz (1974, 1977) made use of an existing linguistic system (particularly Saussure's) in order to take account of visual images in film. This may be related, among other factors, to the fact that language was the first semiotic mode to be

systematically analysed in the 'West'.

Both cases, where visual images were neglected or where they missed out of the scope of textual analysis and where certain linguistic concepts had to be drawn in order to take account of visual images. They lacked a systematic framework for the analysis of visual images. As Metz (1974) argues, although linguistics is theoretically one part of semiotics, semiotics depends upon linguistics for its recognition (in relation to Saussurean semiology). Given Metz's point, the application of linguistic concepts for the understanding of visual images which are demonstrated by linguistic oriented studies of visual images can be regarded as a positive attempt to look at visual images in as systematic a way as language has been explored. However, it seems to me problematic to impose linguistic principles onto the understanding of visual images.

Semiotic approaches to visual images (Barthes, 1977; Williamson 1978; Thibault, 1997) secure the value of the visual mode as an autonomous representational mode rather than as having secondary or additional status to language. Barthes' proposition of *anchorage* and *relay* (1977) opens up the issue of cross-modal relations: language and visual images. Barthes' attempts to make a systematic approach to the visual mode of communication in relation to language is a breakthrough in terms of the exploration of the way different semiotic modes attribute meaning. However, his model needs to be elaborated upon given the increasing use of visual images in communication; the way in which these two semiotic modes are related cannot be homogeneous and this requires a more detailed framework that can be applied across different types of texts.

Williamson's account of visual images exclusively in advertisements (1978) demonstrated how visual images can actually manifest ideology. Her intensive focus on visual images are relevant to my project and her solid theoretical framework based on the

system of signification (the signifier and the signified relation) makes it possible to look at visual images in a systematic way. Her thematic propositions from which advertisements are examined (e.g. 'Nature vs Natural'), however, are considered within the context of contemporary Western capitalist culture and society. The use of advertisements to Williamson allows her to explore the role of visual images as a commercial strategy that is deeply related to the representation of ideology.

My research, which also focuses on visual images in advertisements, has a different concern from that of Williamson's. I am not interested in ideology represented in visual images that is connected to the commercial impact of advertisements but in the form of representation through the visual mode in relation to a broader ideological domain: ideology as cultural and social value systems. In other words, I explore visual images as a manifestation or a representation of cultural and social value systems, from which of course commercial practices are derived, yet are more fundamental than the ideology of commercialism.

The social semiotic approach (Hodge and Kress, 1988) and its application particularly to the visual mode of communication (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996) seems to give me the most plausible angle from which visual images can be explored as a means of manifesting social and cultural practices. However, I acknowledge Andrews' criticism of social semiotics (1998:10):

> social semiotics tries to account for the links between that system and the social context in which the system operates. It is a practice that works from the inside out, reading significance (ie connectedness) from the signs which constitute the 'message'. In that respect, it's like archaeology: a sifting through of relics and remains in order to find out 'how it was', 'what happened'. Its essentially residual nature is what limits it, in my view.

While social semiotics may be seen as backward looking, it is my view that it can also

account for the production of texts (Kress, 1996b), namely the process of meaning making.

Social semiotics combines the systematicness of traditional semiotic theory (based on the sign as a component of signifier and a signified) with a strong emphasis on social and cultural factors. The social semiotic approach also allows the researcher to look at a given text focusing on different modes of representation (because it is not restricted as a model for linguistic analysis). Although social semiotics (Hodge and Kress, 1988; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996) so far has focused mainly on Western discourse, its approach has good potential to be expanded to different social and cultural contexts, where different social semiotics are at work.

To sum up, the use of a sign system as a theoretical basis for a systematic approach to all kinds of semiotic phenomena, the strong recognition of significance of social cultural conditioning to the meaning making of any text, and the flexibility that allows cross-cultural or inter-cultural perspectives are the most relevant aspects of Social Semiotics to my research.

In the following section, I will outline a more detailed account of the theoretical framework for my analysis of visual representations, which is drawn from social semiotics (Hodge and Kress, 1988) and its application to visual images (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996).

2.3 A THEORY FOR A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE VISUAL

In the previous section, I have discussed and reviewed how previous studies have treated visual images, in other words, how visual images have been analysed from various

perspectives and how they are related and relevant to my research. In this section, I will outline a theoretical framework on which my textual analysis will be based. It has as its basis the concept of three metafunctions of semiosis: the Ideational, Interpersonal and Textual.

2.3.1 Visual semiotics and the three metafunctions

Kress and van Leeuwen's study (1996), based on Halliday's notion of 'language as social semiotic' (1978, 1985), demonstrates the potentiality of social semiotics as a theory for the description of visual images (mainly that of two-dimensional images, such as paintings and other visual representations such as diagrams, maps and advertisements). The following is how Kress and van Leeuwen define the three metafunctions in relation to semiotic meaning making:

1) the ideational metafunction
   the ability of semiotic systems to represent objects and their relations in a world outside the representational system or in the semiotic system of culture (Ibid:45).

2) the interpersonal metafunction
   the ability of semiotic system to project the relations between the producer of that sign or complex sign, and the receiver/reproducer of that sign, that is to project a particular social relation between the producer, the viewer and the object represented (Ibid:41).

3) the textual metafunction
   the ability of the semiotic system to form texts, where complexes of signs cohere both internally and with the context in and for which they were produced and different Compositional arrangements which allow the realization of different textual meanings (Ibid:41).

Kress and van Leeuwen attempt visual analysis using these three aspects of the visual component of a visual 'grammar', which are at work simultaneously in a given text. They investigate the way in which these functional components are realised mainly through the *forms* of visual representations: visual syntax.

2.3.1.1 The Ideational metafunction

According to Halliday (1978), the Ideational metafunction in language represents the speaker's meaning potential as an 'observer', which expresses the "phenomena of environments: creatures, objects, actions, events, qualities, states and relationships"(*transitivity*). Through this function of language, the speaker is able to use "his own individual experience as a member of a culture". This is a "content function" of language, in other words, language 'about something'. (In terms of the semiotic component of 'situation', this function of language corresponds to the category of 'Field'.)

With respect to the Ideational function in the visual mode, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) recognize two sub-categories within the visual system: Narrative process and Conceptual process. The former in the visual system has to do with 'dynamic' processes in visual structures and presents "unfolding actions and events, processes of change, transitory spatial arrangement" and the latter refers to 'static' features of visual elements and represents "participants in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, or structure, or meaning"(79). This classification proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen is fully aware of its linguistic counterpart (systemic functional linguistics), Material/Mental process in relation to Narrative process and Relational process in relation to Conceptual process (Halliday, 1985).

The central concept of Narrative process lies in the recognition of vectors that emanate from actors, "the participant from whom the vector departs, and which may be fused with the vector to different degrees"(57). In other words, the idea that 'transitivity' in the visual mode has a distinct realisation: a realisation through visual means. The crucial aspect is the vectoriality, the force or dynamic concerning given participants. For

example, an image of an aeroplane, which is flying from one direction to another creates one type of vector, and the eye line of given (usually human) participants can also form directionality, solely or in relation to other participants. Represented participants (usually human) in action can form a certain directionality, for example, depending on which direction they are depicted to be heading for. Certain processes or temporal sequences represented in the text also have the potential of creating visual directionality, as is seen in an instruction of 'how to get it done' or the temporal process of 'before and after'.

Conceptual processes are characteristic of maps, diagrams, charts and instructions, where a text represents a taxonomy ('Classificational process'); a text "relates participants in terms of a part-whole structure (Ibid:89)" ('Analytical process'); a text shows "what a participant means or is" (108). In these processes, it is *the state*, rather than *the action* in the text that is the main concern. However, a process which Kress and van Leeuwen call 'Spatio-temporal analytical structures' can share common ground with the Narrative (action) process in that it creates one type of vector, or potential dynamic of temporal sequences, such as 'before' and 'after'.

The Ideational metafunction is concerned with the ways in which visual elements (participants) are represented, and related to each other in texts, which is realized by the choice of one process or another. This point leads to another aspect of visual semiosis, as Thibault (1997) says:

> In the case of depiction, the visual grammar is comprised of visual forms such as vectors, lines of tension, volumes and principle of symmetry and asymmetry, which enter into structural relations with each other in the visual image (330).

Since actions and states are represented in a context of visual space, it follows that, as Thibault points out, the Ideational metafunction is a configuration of yet another aspect of visual semiosis, concerning "structural relations", which are discussed in relation to

Textual metafunction.

2.3.1.2 The Textual metafunction

The Textual metafunction in language has to do with the formation of 'texture', and it also represents the speaker's 'text-forming potential'. It forms "the relation of the language to its environment, including both the verbal environment and the non-verbal, situational environment". Halliday (1978: 113) argues that "the textual component has an enabling function with respect to the other two [the Ideational and Interpersonal metafunction]. It is only in combination with textual meanings that ideational and interpersonal meaning are actualised".

The Textual metafunction realised in the domain of the visual mode is concerned with visual space: how visual space is used in relation to meaning making. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) propose three main components of textual meaning in visual representations: *Information value*; *Salience*; *Framing* (183):

1) Information value. The placement of elements (participants and syntagms that relate them to each other and to the viewer) endows them with the specific informational values attached to the various 'zones' of the image: left and right, top and bottom, centre and margin.

2) Salience. The elements (participants and representational and interactive syntagms) are made to attract the viewer's attention to different degrees, as realized by such factors as placement in the foreground or background, relative size, contrasts in tonal value (or colour), differences in sharpness, etc.

3) Framing. The presence or absence of framing devices (realized by elements which create dividing lines, or by actual frame lines) disconnects or connects elements of the image, signifying that they belong or do not belong together in some sense.

With respect to Information value, and generally speaking, Kress and van Leeuwen focus on what they call "Western visual semiotics", whose visualisation is shown in Figure 2-2.

There are values or meanings which are attached to each spatial domain. The notion

of Given and New owes its theoretical basis to Halliday's description of the distribution of information structure in English speech. Kress and van Leeuwen argue that the information value of Given and New is visually realised in the left and right part of visual textual domain, respectively. The meaning of Given is something that is already known, "common-sensical", and "self-evident", while New represents something yet to be found out, "problematic", "contestable" and "the information at issue".

The values that are attached to the top and bottom part of visual space is an ontological realization: visual elements which are placed in the upper part of visual space (Top) present "the idealized or generalized essence of the information" and are "most salient": this is termed 'the Ideal'. Elements in the lower part of visual space (Bottom), on the other hand, are responsible for "more specific, more 'down-to-earth' information", called 'the Real'.

Kress and van Leeuwen argue that the visual structure of centre/margin functions in a more significant role in Asian visual semiotics than in the Western visual semiotic, which can be explained in terms of cultural value systems. They speculate that this tendency may be related to "the greater emphasis on hierarchy, harmony and continuity in Confucian thinking that makes centring a fundamental organizational principle in the visual semiotic of their culture" (Ibid:206).

I share the view of Kress and van Leeuwen that the distribution of values in visual space is not universal, in other words, culturally transparent. My assumption is that each culture has an underlying semiotic system that governs various modes of semiosis, such as visual and linguistic, although language has been treated as the proto-mode of semiosis or as 'translinguistic' by semioticians like Saussure and Barthes. In the era of globalization, it is possible that the making of texts will grow borderless, across cultures.

That is, in the past, Western visual design went through what is called *Japonism* (section ***2.2.4.1***) and Japanese visual design has taken on a considerable degree of western influence (particularly from the United States after the Second World War) in its visual design.

For example, Kress and van Leeuwen use a Philippine advertisement as an example, where the conventional Western iconographical element (the image of the rising sun) is embedded and modified (the sun is depicted as rising in the West: the right side) so that it fits its local culture. Thus, there is a necessity to consider different kinds of distribution of values in visual space, depending on a given culture.

Together with above mentioned 'visual metaphor', the relations between the visual domain and the values or meanings attached to it, the notion of 'salience' also contributes to compositional features of texts. While the distribution of information value depends on each domain of visual space, 'salience' functions regardless of positioning of the visual elements. (Besides the notion of 'salience' has relevancy to the Interpersonal function of *Social Distance*, which will be covered later in this section.)

Framing is another factor that determines textuality in that "the presence or absence of framing devices disconnects or connects elements of the image, signifying that they belong or do not belong together in some sense". Kress and van Leeuwen propose ways in which framing is realized in the texts: realised by frame lines; by discontinuities of colour or shape; by empty space between the elements. The absence of framing "stresses group identity" in the represented elements, while framing manifests "individuality and differentiation" among elements.

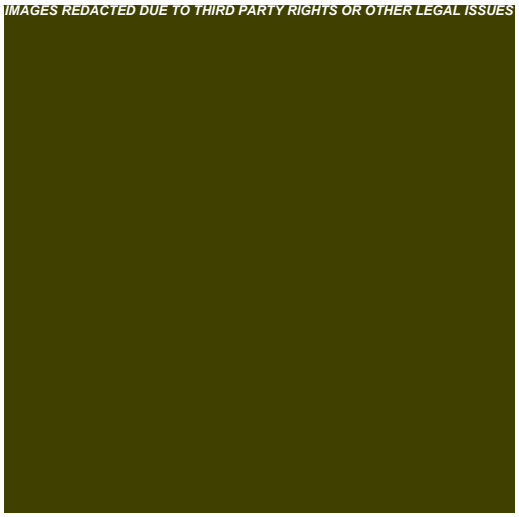

Figure 2-2 ***The Dimensions of Visual Space in Western Visual Semiotic (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:208)***

2.3.1.3 The Interpersonal metafunction

The Interpersonal metafunction in language realises the speaker's meaning potential as participants, which forms language as "doing something" between participants. This is where the "role relationships associated with the situation" can be realised through language, by the use of certain linguistic markers, such as mood system and modality. This function allows the speaker to "intrude himself into the context of situation, both expressing his own attitudes and behaviour of others" (Halliday, 1978:112). For example, the polite and formal use of language can encode a certain type of social distance, in comparison with less formal use of language. The choice of graphic representation of linguistic elements in texts can also function as a interactive marker between the 'textual world' and the reader 'outside the text'.

With respect to the Interpersonal metafunction in the visual domain, there are three types of relationship between 'participants' i) between the visual elements in given texts ('represented participants'); ii) between represented participants and the viewer ('interactive participants'); iii) between the interactive participants with various subjectivities. The third type of function in visual semiosis is concerned mainly with

social relations between represented participants and interactive participants, in other words, how socially and culturally determined relations are visually realised in texts. Kress and van Leeuwen propose three markers of interactive meanings: *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude*. (Figure 2-3)

They consider the notion of *Contact* (as 'Image act')in relation to its linguistic counterpart 'Speech act'. There are two types of *Contact*: *Demand* and *Offer*. The former is realised when represented participants are engaged in eye contact with the viewer, that is, "the participant's gaze (including actions) demands something from the viewer, and also demands that the viewer enter into some kind of imaginary relation with him/her" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996:122). *Offer* is a kind of contact realised when there is no contact between them, "without participants' directly looking at the viewer" (Ibid: 122).

Social Distance can be visually coded by changing the 'distance' between represented participants and the viewer, which is realised by a close shot (*Intimate/Personal*), a medium shot (*Social*) and a long shot (*Impersonal*). For example, the bigger the 'distance' of the represented participants from the viewer, the smaller *Social Distance* is encoded. What or who is 'supposed to be' close to the viewer, or distanced from the viewer, is determined and coded visually.

The third marker of social interactions is concerned with the system of *Attitude* between the represented participants and the viewer. There are two kinds of *Attitudinal* relations: horizontal (lateral) and vertical positioning of the viewer in relation to the represented participants. Regarding horizontal angle, the meaning of *Involvement* is created when the visual elements are represented from the frontal angle ('front on'), while an oblique angle can code the meaning of *Detachment*, as though the represented

participants are 'turning away from' the viewer.

Vertical angles consists of three types of interactions: *Viewer power*; *Equal power*; *Representation power*. Where the viewer is in a position to look down on the represented participants from a high angle, *Viewer power* is at work, while the represented participants have more power over the viewer when the way in which the represented participants are represented places the viewer to look up to them. *Equal power* is when the visual elements are placed along the eye line of the viewer. The choice of these interactive markers is not unrelated to ideological implications which are socially and culturally determined.

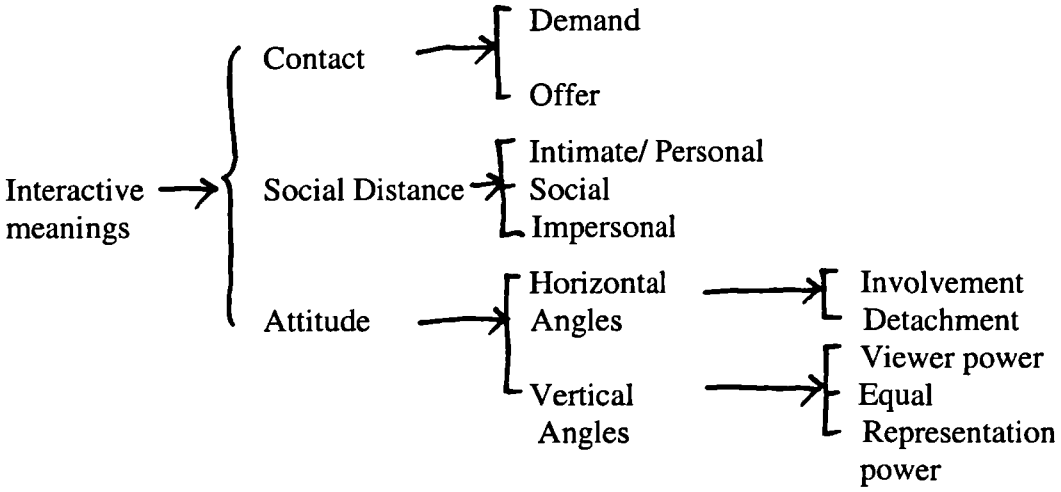

Figure 2-3 ***Interactive meanings (based on Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:154)***

2.4 VERBAL TEXT IN VISUAL COMPOSITION: Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA hereafter) is characterised by "the view of the text as multi-functional, always simultaneously representing the world (ideational function) and enacting social relations and identities (interpersonal function); seeing texts as built from one of many choices within the available systems of options in vocabulary, grammar, and

so forth....The linguistic choices that are made in texts can carry ideological meaning" (Fairclough: 1995). CDA, in this way, draws close attention to linguistic choices, which simultaneously convey certain ideological stances in relation to socio-cultural contexts in which a text is produced, as Fowler (1991:67) discusses:

> Critical linguistics[23] seeks, by studying the minute details of linguistic structure in the light of the social and historical situation of the text, to display to consciousness the patterns of belief and value which are encoded in the language and which are below the threshold of notice for anyone who accepts the discourse as 'natural'. We took the view that 'any' aspect of linguistic structure whether phonological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, pragmatic or textual, can carry ideological significance.

"The minute details of linguistic structure" has mainly to do with the syntactic level of linguistic message, such as *transitivity, transformation (passive/nominalisation), lexicalization* and *modality*. 'Transitivity' is "the foundation of representation: it is the way the clause is used to analyse events and situations as being of certain types" (Fowler Ibid:71). The choice of use between intransitive/transitive verbs can give/deprive the agent of certain actions/doings, which is not unrelated to the ideological stance of the text and its producer.

In a functional approach like CDA, the choice of certain linguistic structures is considered to give rise to differences in the function they serves. Therefore, the use of the passive form, instead of the active form, is a realization of a certain stance, in that the former enable the agent of action not only to be deleted or at least to be less explicit but also switch of theme and focus together with effect on process. In the case of nominalisation:

> Deleted in the nominal forms are the participants (who did what to whom?), any

[23]I will use Critical linguistic here interchangeably with CDA for the purpose of my analysis.

> indication of time - because there is no verb to be tensed - and any indication of modality - the writer's view as the truth or the desirability of the proposition.... We claimed that nominalisation was, inherently, potentially mystificatory; that it permitted habits of concealment, particularly in the area of power-relations and writer's attitudes. (Fowler Ibid:80)

The concept of *lexicalisation* is considered as a continuum between *underlexicalisation* and *overlexicalisation*. Fowler defines it as:

> Underlexicalization is the lack of a term or of a set of terms. The psycholinguistic theory of vocabulary that we have been assuming would suggest that such gaps, in an individual's lexical repertoire, mean that the individual does not have access to the concepts concerned, or has difficulty of access....underlexicalization is marked by two alternative linguistic devices: either the noticeable suppression of a term, or the substitution of a noticeably complex expression for what in other registers would be a simple term. (Ibid:216)

On the other hand, as for *overlexicalisation*:

> Overlexicalization is, as its name suggests, the opposite process: the availability, or the use, of a profusion of terms for an object or concept....Strictly speaking, overlexicalization of the existence of many synonyms or near synonyms, but is useful to generalize from the specialized phenomenon of synonymy to include other, similar lexical process (Ibid:218)

It is clear from these propositions, that CDA is a language (text and grammar) oriented approach, and it has to be noted that it does not claim that there is always a fixed, intrinsic relationship between certain syntactic forms and meaning, regardless of the type of texts. Critical Discourse analysts deny 'constant relationship between linguistic structure and its semiotic significance' on the grounds that:

> A preponderance of passives, for instance, or of clauses lacking in human agents, or of generic sentences, plural nouns, or whatever, will mean one thing in one text and another in another. The significance of discourse derives only from an interaction between language structure and the context in which it is used: so the discourse analyst must always be prepared to document the circumstances in which communication takes place, and consider their relevance to the structure of the text...If there is any difficulty about the practice of critical linguistics, it is this contextualizing part of it, not the linguistic technique; the contextualizing is a matter of knowledge, experience and intuition (Fowler, 1991:90).

Thus, CDA can be characterised by its emphasis on the 'functional' and 'contextualising'

side of any text, and its treatment of linguistic structure as opposed to the meaning. I will now point out what is significant about CDA in relation to the purpose of my research.

First of all, CDA views language as a social practice, rather than an independent, autonomous discipline, which connects the study of language with other disciplines like cultural studies and sociology. Secondly, CDA recognises that linguistic structure itself is a realisation of function, process and meaning of a given text. The underlying and crucial concept on which these propositions are based is that 'the linguistic sign is motivated', as opposed to Saussure's long established and influential concept: language as a system of signs, where the relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. Hodge and Kress (1992:205) argue:

> Instead of supposing that the linguistic sign is always an 'unmotivated sign',we start from the observation that language consists of many different kinds of signs, all of them responding to social forces and semiotic considerations, always 'motivated' though in different ways and to different degrees. As a basic premise for critical discourse analysis, and for all forms of analysis of language and discourse that are concerned with the social functions of language, we propose that *linguistic signs are always motivated conjunct of form and meanings.*

Without holding this stance of "motivated signs", there would not have been an emphasis on linguistic structures as "a carrier of ideological meanings". In other words, in order to consider the form of language as (socially and culturally) meaningful units, constituencies of signs have to be mutually motivated:

> The signs of syntax are always ideologically inflected social meanings, with a common core which is common for a specified group, and a spectrum of differences, again, mobilised by different groups or for different purposes. These meanings are ideological in two senses: as representation of social existence, and as traces or mobilizations of discursive positioning and activities (Ibid:208).

The point to note here is that CDA implicitly, without any question and debate, tends to equate language as the dominant realisation of discourse, that is, discourse as always realised in language. In my thesis, the reference point of which lies in Kress and van

Leeuwen (1996) and Hodge and Kress (1992), proposes that discourse is also realised in other modes, such as the visual.

In the following section, I will attempt to combine visual and verbal semiosis in terms of the three metafunctions with the perspective of CDA, in order to establish an integrated framework for *multi-modal* (such as the visual and verbal modes) *semiosis*.

2.5 INTEGRATED APPROACH FOR A MULTI-MODAL ANALYSIS OF VISUAL AND VERBAL TEXTUAL OBJECTS

The full understanding of advertisements with regard to the visual and the verbal modes requires analysis not only of linguistic aspects but also of visual elements. As I pointed out earlier in this chapter, it is language that has been seen as the dominant mode of communication. Now, due to the increasing use of the visual mode in all kinds of media (such as in computers, magazines, newspapers, advertisements and school textbooks), there is a necessity for an integrated, systematic framework for the analysis of texts that consists of more than one mode: texts are 'multi-modal'. There is a need to establish a theoretical and systematic way of looking at multi-modal texts.

In this section, I will discuss the integration of visual and verbal modes because these two modes are the most relevant in order to look at printed advertising texts. I will provide an outline of the integrated framework to be applied both to visual and verbal modes in my analysis.

There have been few studies where visual and verbal modes are examined from a common perspective, as an integrated meaning making mechanism. Among the few, Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996) are aware of the significance of an integrative

approach to multi-modal texts and their notable achievement lies in their recognition of the underlying semiotic system that determines and influences each role of each semiotic mode. Their emphasis on 'multi-modality' is proposed in response to 'logocentrism' by Kress, Leite-Garcia and van Leeuwen (1997: 257):

> Not only is written language less in the centre of this landscape, and less central as a means of communication, but the change is producing texts which are strongly *multi-modal.* That is, producers of texts are making greater and more deliberate use of *a range of representational and communicational modes* which co-occur within the one text.

They argue that multi-modality has always existed in various kinds of texts, in all human communication but it has been given little attention, let alone a systematic approach to its analysis, because of the primary emphasis on the linguistic mode above other modes of semiosis.

Strong recognition of multi-modality within a text also implies a possible shift in the treatment of the linguistic mode. As the semiotic landscape has changed, even the verbal mode itself can now be seen to be multi-modal with such functions: language as 'linguistic (semantic) message' and language as 'graphic devices' when it is realised. In other words, the linguistic mode alone no longer carries all of the functional load of a message, it penetrates into the traditional domain of the visual mode, that is, language as a *material* entity. This treatment of language as multi-modal can be said to be a useful concept in order to deal with the complexity of the contemporary semiotic landscape, which allows the traditional 'territory' of each semiotic mode to be reconsidered, depending on textual environments.

Another significant aspect, which is emphasized by Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996) and Kress et al (1997) is the equal status given to each semiotic mode, instead of giving the linguistic mode the primary position. Kress et al also question the validity of

visual images as 'transparent' and 'overt' communication, which are based on "a defined set of connotation and visual images", with reference to Williamson's (1978) semiotic analysis of advertisements:

> In much analysis of advertising, or of images in textbooks, there has been a pre-occupation with the visual equivalent of lexis: what is represented? How is it represented? A typical example would be a discussion of the use of a representation of the female body to 'connote' aspects of femininity, of sexuality, or eroticism, transferred to a particular commodity. Similarly with other 'lexis': whether of pine forests to suggest freshness, tall grass to suggest 'naturalness'. For us, such interests are analogous to content analysis. We refer to this 'lexical' aspect as the iconography of the visual (analogous to 'lexicography'). Our interest, however, lies specifically in the analogue of grammatical/syntactic structures of visual representations. Here little theory of description of a plausible kind exists (Kress et al 1997: 260).

At the core of their theoretical framework for analysis of 'grammatical/syntactic structures of visual representations' are three "functional components of the semantic system" (Halliday 1978): Ideational; Interpersonal; Textual metafunction. Given that this notion of three metafunctions are applicable to all human communication (regardless of the semiotic mode in question), it is possible to develop a framework for both modes around this 'common ground': the three metafunctions).

I will now outline a possible means for thinking about the distribution of functional load of visual and verbal mode within multi-modal environments (the visual and the verbal). With respect to Ideational function, first of all, both modes consist of two subcategories: Narrative/Conceptual in the case of visual; Experiential and Logical in language. This is a function that not only represents 'what is going on' within the text, in terms of process, participants and circumstances, but also embodies abstract or general concepts, such as temporal sequentiality and cause-effect relationships. The way in which visual participants are represented realises a type of process (for example, an image of person who is visually depicted as though he she was deep in thought realises a 'mental

process'), the semantic entities of given linguistic features determine the type of process of, for instance, 'He is worried about his project'.

Visual and verbal modes can also realise inconsistent messages. For instance, it is possible to attach a verbal caption 'He was very pleased' with a visual image that indicates this same person is far from 'pleased'. This is where the degree of 'authority' of each semiotic mode comes into play. Therefore, in a multi-modal text, where more than one semiotic modes is involved, the kind of information that is carried in which mode is a significant factor.

Secondly, in the domain of the interpersonal metafunction, both modes provide 'interactive markers', which indicate the relationship between the addresser and addressee of a message: the Interpersonal metafunction. What is done with the visual ('image act') and what is done with language ('speech act') is realised using different resources: the former is realised mainly by the 'gaze' of represented participants in the text (whether or not a participant is engaged in eye contact with the viewer), while it is the 'Mood' system in language (such as 'declarative'; 'interrogative'; 'imperative').

The relationship between what is represented in a text and the viewer (reader) outside the text can also be coded through both semiotic modes. The size and perspective in/from which a given represented participant is depicted can position the viewer in a certain relation to the participants. Language realises this type of relationship through the system of 'Modality', which can indicate the degree of formality and interactiveness. The choice of certain linguistic forms allows the producer of a text to encode formality as opposed to informality, which is related to the degree of interactiveness. When verbal elements are highly conversational and dialogic, for instance, the verbal mode is realising a sense of interactiveness (with the reader), therefore, a closer social distance is created.

Thirdly, my integrated framework is concerned with the role of visual and verbal modes in terms of the Textual metafunction. Visual and verbal elements are responsible for forming textual coherence or integration, which is either represented by the physical position of elements and semantic coherence between the visual and verbal elements. Integration of visual and verbal modes of semiosis in terms of the Textual metafunction is considered from two perspectives: I) the physical positioning (distribution) of visual and verbal elements in a text and ii) 'the reading path'; how the text is read depends on the logical or semantic coherence between language and visual images and also on the presence of Salience.

The first aspect is to do with the visual domain of Right/Left; Top/Bottom in relation to the values or meanings attached to it: the relationship between meanings which are conveyed through each semiotic mode and its placement in the visual domain. Where visual elements are placed and where verbal elements are positioned and how they are related to each other in a given textual space is always meaningful.

In relation to the second aspect is, 'a reading path': how the text is read realises a sense of integration. The functional distribution across visual and verbal modes does not indicate the way the given text is read, therefore, the notion of *salience* becomes an issue in that it 'accentuates' particular visual elements above others, which forms a path through the text - a sequence of elements. That is, textual composition "sets up particular hierarchies of the movement of the hypothetical reader within and across their different elements. Such reading paths begin with the most salient element, from there move to the next most salient element, and so on" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996:219)

According to Kress and van Leeuwen, there are two types of reading path texts encode: what they call *linear* and *non-linear* reading paths. They are manifestations of

syntagmatic and *paradigmatic* relations between represented elements in the text, respectively. The former sets the way in which the given text is read and the latter leaves the reader to their own devices. It can be argued that the contemporary advertising texts I deal with in this research have the latter type of reading path. The consideration of reading paths in these texts (with non-linear reading paths) can also viewed in terms of the issue of social and cultural implications, as Kress and van Leeuwen point out:

> Different readers may follow different paths. Given that what is made salient is culturally determined, members of different cultural groupings are likely to have different hierarchies of salience, and perhaps texts of this kind are the way they are precisely to allow for the possibility of more than one reading path, and hence for the heterogeneity and diversity of their large readership (Ibid: 219).

Therefore, the degree to which the reading path of each text is determined varies depending on the reader's subjectivity which is conditioned by the kind of "cultural groupings" to which he or she belongs. Reading path not only manifests an *intratextual* cohesion in the sense that it connects elements across the different semiotic modes; what the visual modes realises and what the verbal mode realises (as a 'marker' of integration of multi-modality), but also materialises cultural specificness in semiosis.

Intertextuality

Finally, I would like to mention the notion of 'intertextuality' as another component of extra semiosis of multi-modal texts. The notion of 'intertextuality', what I wish to use comes from the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, who considers language and human linguistic activities in terms of social origin. One of his major propositions is that no single text is free from 'intertextuality' in that (Bakhtin, Trans by Holquist, 1981:293-294):

> There are no "neutral" words and forms - words and forms that can belong to "no

> one"; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents...As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention.... Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated -overpopulated- with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process.

Therefore Bakhtin recognises 'multiple voices', which he calls 'heteroglossia' and argues in relation to discourse in the novel:

> Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with those help heteroglossia [rasnorecie] can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized) (Bakhtin, Ibid:263)

This concept of 'heteroglossia' can be applied not only to contemporary written works but also to multi-modal texts, including advertisements, where meaning making is, in Bakhtin's terms, always conditioned by other texts even beyond different genres. Intertextuality is related to the interpersonal function of semiosis in that the interpretation of certain texts depend on the reader's recognition of intertextuality, and at the same time, intertextuality within the given text assumes who the reader is.

For example, a piece of advertisement copy that plays with words which are quoted from some canonical literary work (such as Shakespearean phrases) requires the reader to be aware of that other text - it sets up a relation of intertextuality. The same can be true of visual representations. Advertisements make good examples where the motif of traditional art works are modified (or 'populated' in Bakhtin's term) and made use of in order to convey a message of propaganda (Berger, 1972).

In this respect, intertextuality is related to the Ideational metafunction of semiosis,

in that intertextuality can determine the way in which both visual and verbal representations are realised. I will therefore consider the domain of intertextuality 'above' the three functional components of ideational, interpersonal and textual.

Kress (1999 forthcoming) proposes a different way of viewing the dynamic of text, namely, "text as a punctuation of the process of semiosis":

> If we see semiosis as ceaselessly ongoing then both the relatedness and the connections of texts is unremarkable: it is what is normal, and no special term needs to be invented to name it (Ibid:5).

Kress's argument here not only solves the difficulty in the established theory of intertextuality, but also makes the issue of intertextuality itself rather redundant, because the entire dynamic of semiosis itself provides the 'common ground' in the first place, where the process of meaning making (in the form of 'text') is taking place. Yet, this stance might lead to the issue of *intersemiosis*, that is the inter-relationship between different types of semiosis, which can be determined, for instance, by differences in the social-cultural environment.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In the process of developing my theoretical framework which has begun to explore the Japanese visual semiotic system, I have drawn two main perspectives from my literature survey: a descriptive framework for the analysis of visual images and a way of looking at visual images in terms of ideology. My discussion of studies of visual images which are based on linguistic theory (Forceville, 1996; Myers, 1994; Cook, 1992; Metz, 1974, 1977, 1982; O'Toole, 1994) has demonstrated that it is useful to adopt linguistic theories to explore the way in which the visual mode works. Although my research is not directly

concerned with linguistics, these studies have provided a basis for the analysis of meaning in visual images. The second perspective that I have drawn from my literature survey is to identify the presence of ideology, especially concerning the representation of cultures in visual images. Most useful in this area has been Moeran (1991, 1992, 1996) and Dingwall et al (1991) who have shown the way in which visual images embody cultural stereotypes. My theoretical framework is therefore the combination of two perspectives: a methodology that the descriptive framework (which is based mainly on Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996; O'Toole, 1994) provides and sociological and cultural accounts that enable a deeper interpretation of visual semiotics. I have not used O'Toole's faithful application of the Hallidayan framework of Systemic Functional Grammar (1994) because of its narrow categorisation to which visual data has to fit. Compared to O'Toole, Kress and van Leeuwen's treatment of visual images views visual semiosis in a wider perspective: the visual semiotics as one of the modes of representation that constitutes human communication. In this sense, Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996) has particularly provided a useful framework for the analysis of visual images and it also has potential to be applied to a wider range of visual texts. My descriptive framework is different from theirs in that it is modified so that it allows for visual semiotic analysis in a cross-cultural perspective rather than within the Western visual semiotic environment.

Chapter III METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, there are three points to be discussed: the data, **3.2**, Theory in Use, **3.3**, and the structuring of the textual analysis in the thesis, **3.4**.

The first section, **3.2** Data, will discuss the reasons and the relevance for selecting these data, in relation to the purpose (and focus) of the research; and theoretical consequences of using these data.

In the second section, **3.3** Theory in Use, I will introduce descriptive/analytical categories, which are derived from the proposed integrated theory discussed in the previous chapter (section **2.3**). These are the formal tools which enable me to carry out my semiotic analysis. I will also demonstrate how these categories are going to be applied for my textual analysis of the data, which is described in section **3.2**.

In section **3.4**, I will outline the manner in which I have structured the textual analysis in this thesis. This is the way in which individual categories are going to be applied in each chapter and how these chapters are related to each other in terms of a theoretical cohesion.

3.2 DATA

The first section ***3.2.1*** will discuss the rationale of choosing advertisements as textual material, in relation to the focal issue (visual semiotics) of this research: how do advertisements provide data for a study of visual semiotics? In section **3.2.2** I will

explain why I have chosen particular types of advertisements. Section ***3.2.3*** will say more specifically where the advertisements are taken from, and there I will also give a brief profile of the readership of the source, together with the types of commodity that are advertised in these examples.

3.2.1 Why use advertisements?

The primary purpose of this research is to explore Japanese visual semiotic. Visual semiotics can be studied through various kinds of texts, such as photographs and paintings. In my research, I make use of advertisements to investigate the way in which visual semiotic systems work. To begin with, I would like to focus on the reasons why this particular type of 'text', the *advertisement*, has been chosen as data. Advertising is an almost 'naturalised' phenomenon in capitalist societies, where consumerism is encouraged and images and ideas conveyed through advertisement create 'an idealised world' to which consumers they may supposedly gain access in exchange for money (Berger 1978; Myer 1986). Advertisements are everywhere, as Williamson points out, "They [advertisements] are ubiquitous, an inevitable part of everyone's lives: even if you do not read a newspaper or watch television, the images posted over our urban surroundings are inescapable (1978:11)". Thus advertisements, which are central to consumer culture and one significant form of public communication, provide a good source for the investigation of contemporary perception of a given culture by another and the construction of cultural 'images' by another. In this respect, contemporary advertisements are 'indicators' of the degree of (cross-) cultural understanding or perception.

With respect to the relevance of the use of advertisements as data to the aim of this

research, first of all, advertisements offer a good source for the exploration of visual semiosis, in that advertisements make abundant use of visual images, and "In no other form of society in history has there been such a concentration of images, such a density of visual messages" (Berger, 1978:129). In this respect, advertisements are suitable textual data for the study of meaning making through the visual mode. Although it is the Japanese visual semiotic that is the primary focus of my thesis, I will examine them in relation to some of their British counterparts, in order to get a clear focus on how the Japanese visual semiotic functions. Advertisements, which are one form of the manifestation of pervasive cultural practice across cultural boundaries, provide contemporary data for the consideration of cross-cultural semiosis.

Secondly, advertisements consist not only of visual images but also use other semiotic modes, such as language; or sound in the case of radio / television commercials. They are 'multi-modal' texts. This multi-modal feature of advertisements can provide relevant data for the consideration of functions of each semiotic mode and also relations among them. This has an advantage in that the exploration of the role of the visual mode of semiosis can be carried out more effectively through a comparison with other semiotic modes, such as language. In other words, examining this cross modal relationship (multi-modality) in given data enables me to observe the working of the visual mode more clearly than when the visual mode is examined as a separate and individual category.

In this way, the use of advertisements as data enables me to focus on the making of visual semiosis i) in relation to other semiotic modes (such as language) and ii) in the (cross-) cultural landscape of semiosis. Although this research views the given texts as multi-modal, it has to be noted that the focal issue of this research is the way in which the visual semiotic contributes to the construction of semiosis. Another point to be stressed

is that my primary concern lies not in the advertisements (advertising texts) themselves but in the role of semiotic modes in one of the major representational forms of contemporary public communication. In this thesis, therefore, I will deal with advertising texts as one of the media through which the proposed issues can be explored. The next section will discuss the source of data and type of advertisements to be used, in relation to the focus of the research.

3.2.2 Type of advertisements used in the thesis

Advertisements occur in a broad range of media; from television commercials, radio commercials, to printed (press) advertisements, as in newspapers and magazines. I will deal exclusively with advertisements from the print media in this study, although both television commercials and radio advertisements can be considered as "two of the main avenues" (Skov and Moeran, 1995) through which advertisements are realised. I now explain on what grounds printed advertisements are relevant to my research.

Television commercials include visual elements, together with language, sound and actions (movements). However, I will leave television commercials out of this research, on the grounds that they include other semiotic modes, apart from the visual and verbal, which require "an additional body of analytical procedures" (Vestergaard and Schroder, 1985). The failure to consider these 'other' semiotic modes in television commercials results in a 'partial' (as opposed to 'comprehensive') reading of the texts, and more importantly, the priority of my research is mainly visual semiosis, and a comprehensive approach to the integration of the visual and verbal modes of semiosis.

Both radio and television commercials have a form of realization as 'temporal'

sequence, and in order for them to be useable as textual data to be analysed, they have to be recorded in a different form from the original form of textual realizations, or transformed into textual materials, in the form of transcriptions of visual shots. For example, a 15 second-long television advertisement may be transformed into a sequence of shots, which represents in a different way; which no longer represents the same sense of 'temporality' on the 'surface of text'. In short, both television and radio commercials cannot be dealt with as data in their 'authentic' form of realization in the actual context. Thus 'temporal sequentiality' which is characteristic of both radio and television commercials might have to be compromised, in the process of textual transcriptions from original form to another. In the case of printed advertisements, by contrast, it is possible to 'store' collected data in the same form as when they are realised, in other words, they can be maintained in the form of two dimensional realization on paper.[24]

3.2.3 The range of printed advertisements used

3.2.3.1 Textual sources

I will specify the particular type of printed advertisements in terms of i) the type of textual sources in relation to brief descriptions of readership; ii) the type of products being advertised. i) and ii) are related to each other because advertisements can manifest subjectivities of the viewer/reader (to whom a given advertisement is addressed), through the type of print medium (where the reader comes across the advertisement); and through what is advertised as a commodity (ordinary commodity or expensive, luxury purchase).

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[24]As an exception, I will use abstract representations of 'shots' from television programmes (Figures 5-20, 5-21); this is one example of transcription of moving images though moving image is spatial and temporal, used as an example of visual 'layout' on the screen.

The textual sources from which advertisements are taken are: newspapers; magazines (women's magazines in particular); leaflets; posters and hoardings[25]. Figure 3-1 shows the list of Japanese and British sources of textual data I am going to use for analysis.

3.2.3.1.1 Newspapers

The Japanese and British sources are the two newspapers: *Yomiuri Shimbun* and *The Sunday Times,* respectively. The former is "the nation's best-selling newspaper" (Moeran 1996:174), and its circulation of the morning issue is 10.05 million (Source: *PR Handbook '97-* http://www.kanzaki.com/jpress/newspaper.htm). *The Sunday Times,* is one of the Britain's leading 'quality', broadsheet newspapers. Both of the papers can be characterized by their readership as 'right-wing' and 'middle-class' papers[26]. In this respect, *Yomiuri* and *The Sunday Times* can be placed roughly in a parallel position in Japan and Britain, in terms of the profile of their readers.

3.2.3.1.2 Women's magazines

I will use two kinds of magazines: women's magazines and magazines for general readers as my second textual source. First of all, I have chosen women's magazines, Japanese ones in particular, in that they often represent a type of Japanese women's readership which is influenced by Western cultures; they therefore are a good example of the aspect

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[25]As a further exception to advertising texts, I will use public instructions (what are called 'isotypes') for my textual analysis of Chapter V.

[26]The social position of the readership of *Yomiuri Shimbun* is less marked as 'newspaper for the middle-class' than that of *The Sunday Times.* In terms of the distribution of articles, *Yomiuri* takes a similar form to that of British newspaper for the middle class, yet, the specification of social class in relation to the type of newspaper in Japan is less clear than in Britain.

	Advertisements				public info.	
	women's magazine	general	newspapers	others		
Japan	*Classy* *Very* *JJ* *More* *With* *anan* *Hanako*	*Spa!*	*Yomiuri Shimbun*	leaflet (N'EX)	isotypes (photo data)	TV weather forecast (NHK)
UK	*Cosmopolitan* *Marie Claire* *ELLE*	*Newsweek* *The Economist* *Time Out*	*The Sunday Times*	London Under-ground poster Kellogg's cereal packet	isotypes (photo data) ULU guidebook	TV weather forecast (BBC)

Figure 3-1 ***Sources of data***

of 'juxtaposition' of Japanese and Western cultures. Women's magazines (both Japanese and British) provide a good source for advertisements for commodities like toiletries, cosmetics, food and drink, and in the case of Japanese women's magazines, advertisements for holidays abroad (which are specially targeted at young single working women with a stable income) are one of the characteristic genres of advertisements in these magazines.

Japanese women's magazines

Advertising texts for my analysis which appear in Japanese women's magazines include *Classy, Very, More, With, anan* and *Hanako.* Among Japanese women's magazines, *Classy, More* and *With* are monthly magazines, which are directed at women in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties: 'adult women', while *JJ, anan* and *Hanako* are for women of a younger age: 19-25 (Skov and Moeran 1995). *Classy, More* and *With*'s readership are: married or single middle-class, usually career-minded women. *Classy* covers a slightly more up-market readership than *More* and *With.*

According to the Internet *source: The Magazine Readership Situation* (http://www.j-magazines.or.jp), *Classy* is a fashion and culture magazine geared for affluent females over 25 years of age. Articles feature fashion, lifestyle, food, health and beauty. The majority of readers seek a lifestyle in which they receive quality and value for their money", while *With* is targeted at women in their 20s and covers lifestyles, career choices, fashion trends and hobby pursuits. Articles are picture-led and emphasize visual impact, [in the sense that it is visual images that carry the significant amount of information in comparison to language. In short, the reader is expected to 'look at' the articles of the magazine, rather than read them]. Regular features include beauty care,

articles of the magazine, rather than read them]. Regular features include beauty care, travel, health and reader's letters, as well as reviews on the current arts and entertainment scene.

The readership profiles of *JJ, anan* and *Hanako* can be summarized as female single and middle-class, with a relatively high educational background (students at universities/junior colleges). *Hanako*, in addition to that, has a regionally specified readership: women living in the greater metropolitan area around Tokyo (Skov and Moeran 1995:66).

As Skov and Moeran argue, women's magazines in Japan are characterized by their "narrow segmentation of expected readership and the subtitles of these magazines that function mainly to set the magazines apart from one another in the market place" (63). For example, *More* has the subtitle "Quality Life Magazine", which is placed above the main title. Another notable point about these magazines lies in the fact that the titles of magazines either use English words or use the Roman alphabet, instead of using Japanese letters/characters. The use of these titles themselves imply a particular readership, that is, a group of women who are at the very least exposed to Western cultures, possibly with a command of English and interest in the West.

British women's magazines

With respect to British women's magazines, *ELLE, Marie Claire* and *Cosmopolitan* are the textual sources for this thesis. In terms of the profile of readership, these three magazines cover a similar range. For example, *Marie Claire* is aimed at readers in the age group of 18-34, who are middle class (*IPCNET data:* http:/ www.ipc.co.uk), which deals with fashion, travel, lifestyle, beauty and health issues around women, *ELLE* has

more emphasis on fashion trends and *Cosmopolitan,* with its readership of women in their twenties to mid-thirties, covers similar issues but it has more feature articles than the other two.

3.2.3.1.3 Magazines for the general reader

Japanese magazines

As for the second type of magazines which are aimed at general readers, I take textual data from *SPA!* and *Shukan-bunsyun* as Japanese sources and *Newsweek, The Economist* and *Time Out* as British sources. *SPA!* is targeted at readers in their twenties (*The Magazine Readership Situation*), while *shukan-bunsyun* has a longer history with a broader readership in terms of its targeted age group (early 20s upward). The former contains more visual images (photographs and illustrations in colours) than the latter, but both of them cover current issues of politics, economics and foreign affairs, including the latest cultural and social news. The articles in both magazines have a wide range of subjects: from politics to gossip about politicians and celebrities.

British magazines

As British sources, with the exception of *Newsweek,* which is American, I am using *Time Out* and *The Economist. Newsweek* has a wide range of coverage from international affairs, the latest scientific technology to cultural reviews (such as books, music and films). *Time Out,* which is a listings magazine for events in the London area, has a non-specific gender group, from the middle class, with a relatively young age group for readers. *The Economist* among these three magazines has the most specific readership, which is aimed mainly at business-related people, or those who are interested

in up-to-date information on world economics, with detailed statistics.

These Japanese and British magazines for general readers are good sources of car and airline advertisements in particular. The magazines, such as *Newsweek* and *The Economist,* which deal with cross-cultural issues and international current affairs are the most likely environment for companies with different nationalities to advertise their commodity or service (particularly in the case of airline companies). They provide textual data for cross-cultural comparison, which I use to explore the ways in which socio-cultural conditioning is manifested in the meaning making (semiosis) of advertisements.

3.2.3.1.4 Other sources

Apart from newspapers and magazines, I will include leaflets, posters and public instructions, as sources of data advertisements. Although they function as advertising of the products and services, they have a different potential from other types of sources such as newspapers and magazines, in that the former does not specify its readership in the same way. For example, advertising posters in a railway station are expected to be 'read' or 'seen' by an unlimited number of people, regardless of their age, social class and interest group, who use the transport system for various reasons. Information / advertisements in the form of leaflets creates yet another type of readership, which is likely, first of all, to be picked up and read by those who are interested. In the case of the brochure for a transport service, for instance, it is possible to define the 'readership' as people who might or will use the service.

I need to raise the question here as to the relevance of the relation between the type of magazines and the readership to my visual semiotic analysis. In a word, looking at the

structure of visual representations in a particular magazines also means implicitly, the exploration of the readership of the magazine. For the structure of visual representations used, and the distribution or use of realisational modes (such as the visual and language) points to readership of a given source. For example, in a magazine which is more visually oriented than language oriented, this particular use of modes indicate an assumption by the makers of the magazine about their readership, for instance, that they are more inclined to get information visually rather than verbally than the readers of another magazine which relies more on the written mode. The prominent use of visual mode over language might give a clue, for instance, about the generation the reader belong to, or the type of jobs they are engaged in, or personal interests, all of which are related to an individual's position in society.

3.2.3.2 Type of commodities advertised

Next I will demonstrate criteria on which my textual data (advertising texts taken from the above-mentioned textual sources) are categorised. To begin with, the type of commodities advertised in data are (see Figure 3-2):

food and drink (14)
transport services (3)
beauty and cosmetics/ chemist (6)
holiday/services (4)
jewels (2)
cars (2)
electric domestic appliances (4)
financial institutions (1)
department stores (1)
domestic furnishing (1)
publishing (3)
public relations information (9)

Although a relatively wide range of advertisements are covered, the emphasis of this

Food and drink

---Laceby Hall Tea
---Kirin Lager Beer (3)
---Asahi Super Dry Beer
---Twining Tea
---Kellogg's cereal
---Suntory Oolong Tea
---Yakult (Japanese)
---Yakult (British)
---Scotch Whisky
---Hagoromo Fruit dessert
---Nichirei Cup Soup
---Batchelor's Cupa Soup

Transport services

---N'EX (Narita Express)
---London Transport night bus service
---JR (Japan Railways) East

Beauty and cosmetics/ chemist

---Bionsen products
---Thicker Fuller Hair products
---Organics shampoo and conditioner (Japanese)
---Organics shampoo and conditioner (British)
---Naron Ace
---Paramol

Holiday/other services

---Toshimaen Theme park
---ANA Orlando campaign
---Happoen Wedding services
---Pountney Clinic

jewels

---De Beers Diamond Ring (Japanese)
---De Beers Diamond Ring (British)

Electric domestic appliance

---NEC Multimedia
---Minolta Camera
---AIWA Hi-Fi
---Seiko Kinetic Watch

Financial institutions

---Sumitomo Bank

Department store

---Keikyu Department Store

Publishing

---University of London Union
---Evening Standard (2)

Public information

---NHK weather forecast
---BBC weather forecast
---Isotypes (7)

Cars

---Subaru Forester
---Toyota Starlet

Domestic furnishing

---Flotex

Figure 3-2 *Types of commodities advertised in data*

research is not on a definite description of particular types of advertisements. Instead, these types of advertisements can be classified into a several categories, in relation to the points of analysis. Advertisements of food and drink, for instance, are where culturally associated 'items' tend to be represented, such as Japanese food, or a British style drink, This type of advertisement, therefore, is useful to investigate the representation of culturally specific images.

It is possible to outline an overall profile of the targeted audience of these advertisements: these are advertisements which aim at young (in their twenties and thirties), middle class people, who are interested in cultural activities and can afford to pay for them. This aspect is particularly important with respect to the selection of Japanese advertisements. For the range of Japanese advertisements I am going to use as data implies a targeted audience whose age group is more characterized by its exposure to Western cultures than previous generations and who are more interested in cross-cultural issues (particularly to do with the West) as part of business or personal interest. As one of the key issues of this thesis is to explore the making of visual semiosis through cultural and cross-cultural aspects of Japan in relation to Britain and by implication (the West), it is plausible to choose the most likely type of advertisements as data, where not only culturally specific but also cross-cultural implications can be visually coded (or in other words, visualised). These advertisements provide the source in which the visual mode is likely to manifest cultural or cross-cultural phenomenon in conjunction with other modes of semiosis.

3.3 THEORY IN USE

The previous section **3.2** has given an account of my data: Japanese and British printed advertisements. In this section, I will outline descriptive/analytical categories, which are derived from the integrated theories outlined in Chapter II, and demonstrate how they are going to be 'utilised' in the actual analysis of data.

To begin with in section ***3.3.1***, before introducing individual descriptive/analytical categories, I will make a clear definition of the relevant concepts and terms in my textual analysis. They are: the notion of *text* and *discourse* (section ***3.3.1.1***); type of participants (section ***3.3.1.2***); the concept of visual *lexis* and *syntax* (section ***3.3.1.3***).

In section ***3.3.2***, I will describe individual categories, which are classified under the types of semiotic metafunctions (the Ideational, Textual and Interpersonal). I will proceed with reference to the list of categories shown in Figure 3-4. Section ***3.3.2.1*** is concerned with an aspect of the Ideational metafunction: the role of the visual semiotic mode to represent visual elements as a unit of signs. Section ***3.3.2.2*** will focus on another aspect of the Ideational metafunction: the representation of *processes* in visual elements. The Textual metafunction will be discussed in section ***3.3.2.3***, in relation to the use of visual space, in other words, the placement of visual elements in a given space and meanings which the placement produces. The final section ***3.3.2.4*** will focus on the Interpersonal metafunction of semiosis, which suggests the relationship (or interactive meanings) between what is represented in a given example and the viewer.

The rationale of choosing a qualitative approach

There are at least two different ways of looking at advertisement data, depending on how the data is 'read': via a qualitative or a quantitative method. My approach to visual

images, which is based on social semiotics (Hodge and Kress, 1988; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990, 1996), belongs to the former type of method in that it is concerned with the processes of meaning making of a given text, rather than taking an account of what is seen in the text through quantitative measurements (which is represented by an approach such as content analysis). While content analysis covers 'content' as something 'overt', that can be observed on the superficial level, the social semiotic approach interprets 'content' in terms of a more complex concept, the system of signs: 'content' is not only seen as formal entities of given texts but also is 'read between the lines', with reference to socio-cultural contexts, by which semiosis of the texts is determined.

Social semiotics is, therefore, a more suitable analytical tool than quantitative methods, for looking at visual representations as a whole text, and at a text as one meaningful unit rather than focusing only on a certain thematic category of a given theme involving extensive amounts of data. I find it problematic to pick up one particular aspect of a given text (that is relevant to a chosen thematic category) at the expense of taking contextual meaning into consideration. In other words, seemingly parallel and equivalent aspects across different texts that appear to belong to the same thematic category can never have an identical meaning simply because each of them are placed in different contexts. Although the size of data that social semiotic approach allows the researcher to deal with might have to be compromised in comparison to the scope of data that can be dealt with content analysis, a Social semiotic approach enables the researcher to carry out a much closer examination of given texts, including the process of meaning making (not just in the form of products).

3.3.1 Key descriptive/analytic concepts and terms

3.3.1.1 Text and discourse

This is a well debated notion and both terms can be defined from various perspectives. In my textual analysis, however, I would restrict the scope of what each word covers. I will use the word *text* as a material entity, such as in advertising *texts*, which is to be distinguished from *discourse*. The concept *discourse* has also been intensively debated, most notably from a (post-) structuralist perspective (Foucault 1971, 1972), and from a linguistic point of view (Brown and Yule 1982; Coulthard 1986; Kress 1989, 1993; Fairclough 1992, 1995a, 1995b; Stubbs 1983). My use of the term *discourse* implies meanings (or concepts) which are actualised, materialised through the medium called *text*. When *text* is a physical entity, *discourse* is something that lies behind the making of the 'text'. Lemke (1995:6-7) suggests:

> It [Discourse] can be used to mean something as specific as spoken language, or something as general as the social process of communication. It can refer to a general phenomenon, the fact that we communicate with language and other symbolic systems, or to particular kinds of things we say.....On each occasion when particular meanings characteristic of these discourse are being made, a specific *text* is produced. Discourse, as social actions more or less governed by social habits, produce texts that will in some ways be alike in their meanings....The notions of text and discourse are complementary. When we want to focus on the specifics of an event or occasion, we speak of the text; when we want to look at patterns, commonality, relationships that embrace different texts and occasions, we can speak of discourse.

I agree with Lemke's point that views *text* and *discourse* as complementary entities, in that *text* can never be considered as separate from *discourse*.

3.3.1.2 Types of participants

I will consider two types of (visual and verbal) elements which are involved in the meaning making of visual semiosis, *represented participants* and *the viewer* (or

interactive participants), which are used by Kress and van Leeuwen's analysis of visual images:

> There are two kinds of participant involved in every semiotic act, the *interactive participants* and the *represented participants*. The former are the participants in the act of communication -who speak and listen or write and read, make images or view them; the latter are the participants who are the subject of the communication, that is, the people, places and things (including abstract 'things') represented in and by the speech or writing or image, the participants *about* whom or which we are speaking or writing producing images (1996:46).

For my textual analysis, I will set sub-categories for the represented participants. Advertisements consist both of visual images and verbal elements; the former includes pictures and photographic images and the verbal copy is one example of the latter type. Visual represented participants can either be *human* or *non-human*, the latter of which can be again divided into *objects* and *background*. For example, an image of a bottle of beer is an *object* and the setting (i.e. a park, a hotel) in which represented participants (human or non-human) are depicted is *background*. (See Figure 3-3).

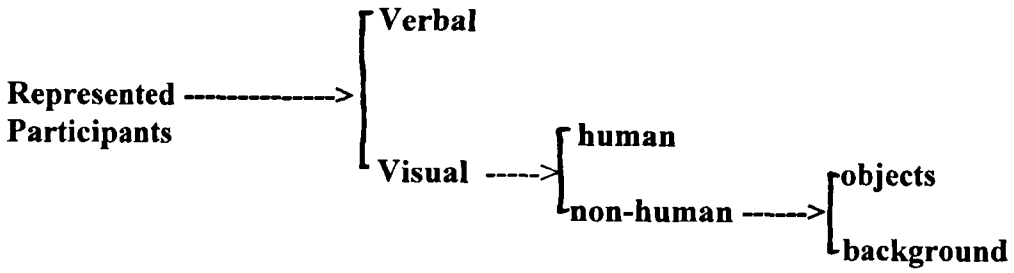

Figure 3-3 ***Represented participants***

rp(s) = represented participant(s)

		Formal features	What is realised
Visual Lexis	IDEATIONAL	**What are rps?** **How are rps represented?** (Represented participants as *the signifier*) Visual → human / non-human Verbal → material entity / semantic entity	-what represented participants signify (Represented participants as *the signified*)
Visual Syntax	--L--	**Visual Directionality** → Inherent / Vectorial	-forward movement, -temporal sequences -creates one flow of *Reading path*
	INTERPERSONAL	**Contact** (*Demand/ Offer*)	-eye contact of rps with the viewer
		Social Distance	-proximity/distance between rps and the viewer
		Attitude Horizontal angle → Frontal / Oblique	-degree of 'involvement'
		Vertical angle → Representation / Equal / Viewer	-power relation between rps and the viewer
		Colours in use **Colour saturation** **Colour differentiation** **Colour modulation**	-degree of salience of the text can be manipulated -creates the sense of contrast among represented participants -creates variation in the degree of 'naturalistic standard')
		Contextualisation (high <---> low)	specific <-------> general
	TEXTUAL	**Positioning of rps** (in Japanese, in British) → **Left** / **Right**	-something already known, taken for granted -something at issue, to be found out
		(in Japanese, in British) → **Top** / **Bottom**	-abstract, ideal notion/concept -something down-to-earth, and specific
		(in Japanese) → **Centre** / **Margins**	-something most prominent, the focal point -sub-ordinate categories
		Salience	-the prominent element in the texts

Figure 3-4 ***Descriptive categories of visual semiosis***

3.3.1.3 Visual lexis/ visual syntax

I will use the terms *lexis* and *syntax* in order to describe different phenomena in visual semiosis. I consider these two aspects of meaning in a given sign along with the three metafunctions as is indicated in Figure 3-4.

I relate visual lexis to sets in the Ideational component, especially the elements which appear, for instance, in structures of transitivity: the Ideational metafunction (see Figure 3-4), which is a unit of meaning that is realised by the existence of visual represented participants: what are represented (whether it is human or non-human, who is he/she, what is it) and their relations. In other words, visual lexis is the signifier material which enters, for instance, as 'participants', into visual transitivity.

Visual syntax can be considered across the Ideational metafunction, the Interpersonal and the Textual metafunction. It is concerned with the way in which elements of visual lexis are related to each other, and the meaning that the relationship between the elements of visual lexis gives rise to. Visual syntax plays a role as a realisation of dynamics in visual images in the form of visual directionality. In relation to the Interpersonal metafunction, visual syntax, by the formal positioning of visual elements, serves as a means of realising the relationship between not only what are depicted ("represented participants") in the text but also what is depicted and the viewer ("interactive participants"). Visual syntax is also related to the Textual metafunction in the sense that the way in which visual elements are distributed manifests a specific meaning at the same time creates a cohesion of the given text as a whole.

3.3.2 Descriptive categories for visual semiosis

In this section, I will demonstrate how descriptive categories (which are based on the

theoretical framework I have proposed in the previous chapter) will be used for the textual analysis of advertising texts. When 'textual analysis' of advertisements is attempted, the main concern lies in the manifestation of semiosis, mainly through represented participants, and also through them in relation to interactive participants (the viewer). Figure 3-4 shows the list of descriptive categories, and I will outline how each of them will be applied to represented participants, and what they realise in terms of meaning making in a given advertisement.

3.3.2.1 Visual lexis: what/who is depicted in the text (The Ideational metafunction)

My textual analysis starts with the recognition of represented participants in a given advertising text, that is, to see what (or who) is depicted in the text. For example, there is an image of young women in a cosmetic advertisement, this image of the woman, as a unit of visual lexis, functions as a sign, which consists of *the signifier* and *the signified.* The presence of the image (*the signifier*) might imply (*the signified*) a sense of glamour or attractiveness, which works positively towards the commercial strategy of the advertisement.

This exploration of the system of *signification* is the level at which scholars like Barthes (1977) and Williamson (1972) have dealt with advertisements, that is, to view an advertisement as an agglomeration of signs. This type of semiotic approach allows us to observe the way in which signification is utilised for the advertiser's commercial strategy, but it tends to view signs as a static entity, which are attached to the advertisement as it is.

3.3.2.2 Visual syntax: transitivity relations of represented participants (The Ideational metafunction)

Represented participants are not 'just there in an advertisement' but embody various *processes* within them. In my textual analysis, I will therefore look at the processes represented participants manifest by drawing attention to *vectors*, which I will call 'visual directionality'. In other words, visual directionality is the way in which represented participants are depicted with a certain implied movement, or dynamic. Represented participants appear in various states, for example, an image of man who is walking towards the right creates the visual directionality of left to right. This type of dynamic process can also be realised through an image of a aeroplane or a car. (In fact, these objects can also create what I call a potential dynamic depending on which direction they are pointing, even if they are not necessarily represented to be flying or moving.)

I consider two types of visual directionality: what I call *Inherent directionality* and *Vectorial directionality*. *Inherent directionality* is realised within a given visual element, in other words, the visual element itself embodies a certain directionality within it. An image of a car pointing to left, for instance, creates the *Inherent directionality* of right to left. *Vectorial directionality* is present when a visual element (that embodies Inherent directionality) is located or positioned in relation to other elements, that is, in this case, the visual element creates visual directionality within a certain environment in which it appears. An image of a man who is walking in a street towards left therefore creates a vector of right to left in the text, namely the Vectorial directionality of right to left is present.

Directionality is realised not only through visual elements like flying aeroplanes and cars, but also through language. Language appears in advertisements most likely in the

form of verbal copy. Depending on *how* it is written, language creates various directionalities (which I call *scriptorial directionality*[27], c.f. Figure 5-1). For instance, the vertical writing style of Japanese produces the verbal directionality of top to bottom, while in the case of English, which is written horizontally, the flow of verbal directionality is left to right.

Both visual and verbal directionality can visualise 'sequences', in that it implies the starting point, from which the movement (or dynamic) proceeds. Visual directionality might manifest forward movements (e.g. an image of a walking person, or a flying aeroplane), which are at the same time the realisation of 'temporal sequence'. Verbal directionality (such as from top to bottom, right to left, left to right) not only gives rise to the 'flow' in the text but also creates a *reading path*: how the text ought to be read.

3.3.2.3 Visual syntax: the positioning of represented participants in the texts (The Textual metafunction)

The next descriptive category is concerned with how each represented participant is placed within textual space. I will deal with three types of textual compositions: Left/Right; Top/Bottom; Centre/Margins. These categories will be used to explore value distribution in each spatial domain: which represented participant with what kind of meaning appears in which part of visual space in advertising texts. With its starting point in the framework by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), which deals exclusively with western visual representations, I will examine how far their framework can be applied

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[27] Language in advertisements also functions as a visual *object* (or material entity) and in this respect, directionality realised by language can be called 'visual directionality'. However, to make a distinction between directionality realised by visual images and directionality manifested by language, I will use two different terms.

and consider the cultural specificness of the distribution of values in spatial dimensions.

3.3.2.3.1 Left/Right

The textual composition of Left and Right will be considered, first of all, based on the proposition in Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), in relation to the structure of information value in English speech, 'Given' and 'New'. 'Given', in English speech, marks a point of departure of certain propositions, which is followed by 'New' information, which forms the nucleus part of the message. 'Given' is something already known and 'New' is something to be found out, something 'at issue'. Kress and van Leeuwen propose that, according to Western visual semiotic, the meaning of 'Given' and 'New' are distributed in the visual domain of Left and Right, respectively.

3.3.2.3.2 Top/Bottom

Secondly, I will focus on what kind of represented participants appear in the domain of the upper part of the text (Top) and the lower or bottom part of the text (Bottom). I am going to use descriptive categories for each spatial domain: 'Ideal' and 'Real', respectively. I will take up advertisements with the horizontal divisions of upper part/lower part, while drawing attention to *what* is realised by what kind of represented participant. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) argue that the domain of 'Ideal' is where something abstract and general is realised and the domain of 'Real' manifests participants with more specific and down-to-earth types of information.

3.3.2.3.3 Centre/Margins

The third type of means of textual composition is the distribution of *Centre Margins.*

This notion of Centre/Margins is considered in terms of the positioning of given elements in the centre and peripheral parts of the text. My textual analysis will be carried out on the underlying assumption that this formal realisation of 'centrality' exists more prominently in Japanese visual representations than in British ones. This does not deny the significance of centrality in visual representations in the Western visual semiotic, because, as Arnheim (1988) argues centrality has been regarded as a symbol of *unity*, as is shown in Christian paintings. 'Centre' is where there is a concentration of force, from which individual elements emanate and also into which these elements are drawn, in a similar manner to centripetal force. Arnheim says, "Centricity is always first. This is true physically, genetically and psychologically" (Ibid:6), by referring, for instance, to "the embryonic development of the nervous system that the nerve cells grow first as independent entities and only secondarily send out linear axons to establish communication with their neighbors" (Ibid:6). Arnheim's proposition here is plausible enough. My research, however, focuses not on these physical, genetic and psychological aspects in relation to the concept of centrality, but on cultural and social aspects: the significance of this particular visual structure in relation to a given socio-cultural context.

3.3.2.3.4 Salience

Some represented participants are represented with greater salience than others. In advertisements, for example, the image of a product tends to be more salient than other elements. The placement of *Salience* is related to the making of textuality in that it indicates how a text is read; its *reading path.* This leads to the question of the relationship between the distribution of meanings in the spatial domain and the positioning of *salience* in a given text, which gives each text a particular textual cohesion

(or 'integration')

3.3.2.4 Visual syntax: how represented participant interact with the viewer (The Interpersonal metafunction)

Finally, I will outline descriptive categories, by which represented participants manifest a relationship with interactive participants (the viewer). I will call these categories *interactive markers* (originally proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen 1996): They are *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude.*

3.3.2.4.1 The system of *Contact*

It is possible for represented participants to involve the viewer in a certain (imaginary) *action:* This is termed as an "image act" (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). An Image act can be realised by a certain action, with which a represented participant is depicted. For example, an image of a woman who is holding a glass of wine towards the viewer, smiling, can be said to engage in an image act, in that she is represented to be inviting the viewer to take part in the action: accepting the glass of wine. As one of the formal categories which provides the medium through which represented participants can interact with the viewer, there is eye contact between the two parties. This is *Contact.*

Contact has two kinds of realisations: *Demand* and *Offer.* The former interactive meaning is realised when a represented participant has eye contact with the viewer; such as a represented participant looking at or smiling at the viewer. The latter type of interaction is realised when a represented participant has no direct eye contact with the viewer and the represented participant presents him/her itself to be 'looked at' by the viewer, that is, "it 'offers' the represented participants to the viewer as items of

information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case" (Ibid:124).

In this way, *Contact* is most typically realised by human represented participants, but it is also possible for non-human represented participants to realise similar functions as *image acts,* such as *Contact.* For example, a visual image of an open book, although there is no eye contact, might realise a *Demand* in the sense that it suggests the viewer read what is written in it, or an *Offer* in the sense that it provides the viewer with certain information. An image of an open cigarette packet might be said to invite the viewer *visually* not *physically*, to enter the world of smoking, and interactive meanings can be either *Demand* or *Offer*, depending on the degree of intensity of the image act. That is, the bigger depiction of given images realises the interactive meaning towards *Demand* and away from *Offer*, whereas the smaller (less salient) representation of visual images might suggest *Offer* meaning rather than *Demand.* In this way, in the case of non-human participants, interactive meanings of *Contact* take place on the 'cline' rather than within a choice system.

3.3.2.4.2 The system of *Social Distance*

The 'distance' between represented participants and the viewer also indicates the relationship between them. This forms the system of *Social Distance*: *Intimate/Personal, Social* and *Impersonal.* Represented participants who/which are depicted with *Personal* distance can allow the viewer to be positioned relatively closer to them, than the ones with *Social* distance. Hall (1964) calls them "Silent assumptions in social communication" in *Disorders of communication* 42:41-55 (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:131):

Intimate distance	------ the head and face only
Close personal distance	------ the head and shoulders
Far personal distance	------- from the waist up
Close social distance	------ the whole figure
Far social distance	------ the whole figure with space around it
Public distance	------ the torso of at least four or five people

The manipulation of *Social Distance* is a realisation of the Interpersonal relationship between the represented participants and the 'world' they represent and the viewer. In this way, the size of depicted participants is one of the materialisations (material realisations) of social interaction in a given context.

3.3.2.4.3 The system of *Attitude*

Apart from *image act* and *Social Distance*, represented participants can be coded with another type of interactive meaning: *Attitude* of represented participants towards the viewer, or that of the given advertisement itself towards the addressee of the advertisement. What I mean by *Attitude* of represented participants includes the degree of involvement (how far a given participant is depicted to have possible involvement with the viewer and what it implies), which is realised by a *horizontal angle* and the power relationship between the participants and the viewer realised by the use of a *vertical angle*[28].

The degree of 'involvement' can be coded by angles from which represented

[28]It is possible to say that *Social Distance* can also manifest the 'attitude' of represented participants in the sense that it can place represented participants either 'close' or 'away' from the viewer's standpoint. But here I use the word 'attitude' in a specific meaning that implies the degree of involvement and power relationship between represented participants and the viewer.

participants are depicted. Represented participants can be photographed either with *Frontal* angle or *Oblique* angle. If a represented participant is depicted with the former type of perspective, the viewer is given a full dimension of the participant: this participants have an interactive meaning of *involvement. Oblique* angle, on the other hand, gives a sense of *detachment* in relation to the viewer position, in that oblique perspectives of represented participants restrict what can be seen by the viewer, in comparison to what the *Frontal* angle allows.

Power relationships between represented participants and the viewer can be manifested by the manipulation of another type of angle: vertical angles. For example, if a represented participant is photographed or represented from a high angle, this would allow the viewer of the text to 'look down on' them. If they are taken from a low angle, by contrast, the viewer is positioned where it looks as though represented participants are looking down on the viewer. To use Kress and van Leeuwen's terms, the former realises *Viewer power* and the latter manifests *Representation power*, between the two of which is *Equal power.*

3.3.2.4.4 *Use of colour*

Apart from these three categories of interactive markers, the choice of colours for represented participants constructs part of the Interpersonal meaning. Here colours function as *affinity* markers (Kress and van Leeuwen 1990). They can function as affinity markers ("to have an emotive effect"), because colours encode socially and culturally determined values; "metaphors for fixed cultural meanings" (Baudrillard, 1996:31). It is culturally 'fixed' but the same colour manifests different interactive meanings, depending on the context in which the given colour is used. For example, the colour red

in traffic instructions has a different interactive meaning from red in an advertisement for cosmetics. In the former case, the colour red might interact with the viewer as a warning, while it might function as the signifier of glamour in the latter case. It has to be pointed out that the systematic categorization of colours as interactive markers has yet to be established.

However, in my textual analysis, I will refer to the use of colours in advertising texts in terms of: colour *saturation*; colour *differentiation*; colour *modulation* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996:165):

(1) *Colour saturation,* a scale running from full colour saturation to the absence of colour, that is to black and white.

(2) *Colour differentiation,* a scale running from a maximally diversified range of colours to monochrome.

(3) *Colour modulation,* a scale running from fully modulated colour, with for example, the use of many different shades of red, to plain, un-modulated colour.

Baudrillard (1996) points out that colour remains "circumscribed by form": colour is a factor that is embedded in the structure of other visual elements. In this respect, it might not be appropriate to call these three categories 'formal properties' of colours, as parallel to other formal categories like *perspectives*. However, I will use these categories as parameters of signification. Depending on what point of a scale a colour is placed, colours can manifest different meanings.

What is realised by the lower degree of colour saturation can be, for example, a sense of understatement, passiveness. According to Baudrillard, in the study of the implications of colours used in everyday life[29], with respect to *colour saturation:*

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[29]Baudrillard argues that painting "liberated colour", in the sense that more colours are being introduced to the domain of every day life, such as domestic appliance (i.e. typewriters, refrigerators), which has been given a conventional colour.

> The world of colours is opposed to the world of values, and the 'chic' invariably implies the elimination of appearances in favour of being: black, white, grey - whatever registers zero on the colour scale - is correspondingly paradigmatic of dignity, repression, and moral standing. (Ibid: 31)

The greater the degree of *colour differentiation* creates a sharper contrast between colours used in a given text, and this contrast fulfills certain functions. For example, an advertisement might use colour differentiation in order to make an image of a product 'stand out', in short, become more salient. Where there is a lower degree of colour differentiation, the boundary between represented participants is likely to be blurred and this leads to a particular signification depending on the given context.

Finally, regarding *colour modulation*, a higher degree of modulation in a text might create the sense of subtlety as opposed to 'bluntness' and perhaps 'coarseness', which is possibly realised by a lower degree of colour modulation.

The scale of colour modulation is also related to the type of visual representation. For instance, cartoon images tend to have a lower degree of colour modulation, while in photographic images (which are considered to be the most typically a 'naturalistic standard' to use Kress and van Leeuwen's term), colours tend to be more highly modulated.

3.3.2.4.5 <u>*Contextualisation*</u>

The final system of the Interpersonal metafunction is *Contextualisation.* This category indicates the degree of realisation of background: this system, like the system of colour, is not based on one choice out of others but is viewed on "a scale running from the absence of background to the most fully articulated and detailed background (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996:165)".

Kress and van Leeuwen argue, restricting their proposition within what they call *the naturalistic coding orientation*, that the lower the degree of *Contextualisation* (towards the *Decontextualisation* on the scale) "represented participants become generic, a 'typical example, rather than particular, and connected with a particular location and a specific moment in time (Ibid:166)".

The choice of the system of *Contextualisation*: on what position of the scale a given represented participant is located is closely related to what the participant 'means' in relation to the viewer, which leads to the construction of interactive meanings. The way in which a particular participant is represented with a particular degree of *Contextualisation* functions as a determiner of the 'stance' of the viewer towards what is represented in the text.

3.3.3 Integrated theory for the visual and the verbal modes of semiosis

The theoretical categories I am going to use for discussion owes a great deal to the notion of language as social semiotic (Halliday, 1978) and social semiotic approaches to multi-modal texts (Hodge and Kress, 1988; Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; Kress et al, 1997), which recognise three functional components of the meaning making system: the Ideational; Interpersonal; Textual functions. I will use the notion of these three functions as a basis for theoretical categories for an integrated way of looking at multi-modal texts.

Figure 3-5 shows how visual and verbal semiotic mode fulfill functions in each component, which will be used as analytical categories for my textual data. With respect to Ideational function, I will focus on the ability of semiotic modes to represent the participants in terms of *processes* they are involved. For example, processes realised by the visual mode can be categorised as Narrative and Conceptual processes. The former

	Visual mode	Verbal mode
IDEAT	Narrative Process → Process / Circumstances Conceptual Process → Classficational / Analytical / Symbolic	Experiential Process (Transitivity) Configuration of Processes Participants Circumstances
INTERPERSONAL	[interactive markers] **Image Act** Contact → Demand / Offer Social Distance → Intimate / Social / Impersonal Attitude → Frontal (involvement) / Oblique (detachment) → Viewer power / Equal power / Representation power **Colours** as affinity marker	[Interactive markers] **Speech Act** Mood → Demand → goods & service / information Offer → goods & service / information Modality Formal <----------> Informal least highly interactive <----------> interactive **graphic device** Type/ shape of Font typed font <----------> hand writing
TEXTUAL	**Textual Integration** 1) How is functional load distributed across the visual and verbal modes? 2) Spatial positioning (distribution) of Left/Right Top/Bottom Centre/Margins 3) Reading paths	

Figure 3-5 ***Descriptive categories of functional loads of the visual and verbal modes***

is to do with the actions (or physical dynamics) the represented participants are engaged in, whereas the latter represents the *state* they are depicted to be in. Processes in language can be expressed in terms of the notion of *transitivity*.

Both visual and verbal semiotic modes manifest interpersonal functions, yet through different ways. I consider 'interactive markers' for a realization of interpersonal meanings. In the case of visual mode, the way in which the represented participants 'exchange' eye-contact with the viewer manifests an Image act, whose equivalent in the verbal mode is 'Speech act', which is a more established notion.

The system of *Contact* ('image act') has two realisations: *Demand* (with eye contact with the viewer) and *Offer* (without eye contact with the viewer). In language, speech act can be realised by the manipulation of four different *Mood* systems (in the case of English): Demand of 'goods and service' (as in Command); Demand of information (as in interrogative forms; questions); Offer of goods and service (as in offering like *Would you like...?*); Offer of information (as in declarative).

What language covers as *Modality* can be realised through visual interactive markers of Social Distance and Attitude. The distance (both physical and metaphorical) between the represented participants and the viewer is visually coded by the size of visual items in the text, while language can manipulate the distance by the degree of formality and 'interacitveness' of writing. For example, the use of a modal auxiliary changes the stance of the 'speaker' in relation to the addresser and when verbal elements make use of dialogic or conversational forms of discourse, it follows that the verbal mode is realising a high degree of interaction, either between the represented participants or between the represented participants and the viewer. It can be said that visual mode has different potential from the verbal mode for the realization of an 'interactive stance' of 'things

represented' in the texts by the system of *Attitude* with which the represented participants are depicted. That is, the choice between the represented participants are shown with frontal perspective or oblique perspective realises the degree of involvement of the participants with the viewer, and whether the participants are taken from high, equal or low angle in relation to the viewer is another way of manifesting part of the interactive meaning (often power relationship between the two subjectivities).

On top of these interactive markers, the visual mode is equipped with another resource for realising interactive meanings, which cannot be realised by the verbal mode, that is the use of *colours* as affinity markers. It is possible for colours to convey Interpersonal meanings as a form of coded message, as is seen in the message by traffic lights, where red means 'stop' and green means 'go'. The issue of the use of colours has a profound cultural implication too, in that each culture has different ways of defining colours (Eco in Blonsky 1985).

The notion of *integration* is considered in the following three stages: 1) *integration* in terms of the distribution of *functional loads*[30] in each semiotic mode; 2) *integration* in the sense that how these functions (through visual and verbal modes) are realised in a given visual space, in other words, how visual and verbal elements loaded with functions are positioned in visual space; 3) the positioning of values (meanings) in the textual domain of visual space does not, however, necessarily indicate another aspect of integrated textuality: a reading path or how the text is read. As the final stage of *integration* of the visual and verbal modes, I will therefore focus on the issue of *reading paths* on the grounds that how a given text is read itself provides *integration*.

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[30] *Functional loads* refer to what a given semiotic mode does, in other words, what kind of meaning it carries.

3.4 A SCHEMA FOR TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

My textual analysis proceeds in the next five chapters as follows,

Chapter IV	Visual Lexis
Chapter V	Visual Syntax 1: Directionality of Use of Space
Chapter VI	Visual Syntax 2: Social Interactions
Chapter VII	Integrated Analysis of Visual Lexis and Visual Syntax
Chapter VIII	Integrated Analysis of the Visual and Verbal Aspects of Textual Objects/ Advertisements

Chapter IV to Chapter VI will examine visual representations with particular reference to the three different semiotic metafunctions. Chapter IV is concerned with the Ideational metafunction of representing visual participants: I will look at the way in which visual lexis functions as a sign. Here I will base my textual analysis particularly on the Barthean notion of signs. Chapter V will focus on the Ideational and Textual metafunctions: in relation to the former, I will draw attention to the notion of visual directionality as a formal realisation of *processes* in represented participants; with respect to the latter, I will consider the use of space and meaning distribution within it. Chapter VI looks at the way in which the relationship between represented participants and the viewer are constructed through formal realisations: the Interpersonal metafunction.

Chapter VII and VIII will take a more comprehensive approach to the data in the way that the textual analysis focuses on the three semiotic metafunctions at the same time. Textual analysis in Chapter VII revisits the examples discussed in Chapter IV. This is to demonstrate how far my framework (descriptive/analytical categories) can suggest what cannot be covered or illustrated by Barthean semiotic analysis. Chapter VIII will deal with the issue of *multi-modality*. Given that advertising texts consist not only of visual but also verbal elements suggests a necessity of further research on this issue. Here I will focus on the role of the visual and the verbal modes and consider the meaning

potential of each semiotic mode.

Throughout these five textual analysis chapters, although the primary focus of this thesis is on Japanese visual semiotics, I will maintain the issue of cross-cultural visual semiotics: Japanese visual semiotics in comparison to its British counterpart. In doing semiotic analysis of the data, I will attempt to explore the relationship between a formal realisation of given visual represented participants and their implications about Japanese and British culture.

Chapter IV VISUAL LEXIS: The Ideational function of representing participants

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on one of the aspects of the Ideational metafunction: the role of the visual semiotic to represent participants. As is discussed in section ***3.3.1.3***, visual lexis is treated as a unit of what visual represented participants realise. Visual lexis is therefore concerned with what or who is represented in a given text. It also forms a unit of signs in the sense that each lexis can be considered as an amalgamation of *the signifier* and *the signified*, from a semiotic perspective.

I will explore to what extent visual lexis manifests cultural stereotypes, in other words, how visual lexis functions as a sign of cultural specificness. I will be looking at the way in which visual lexis in Japanese advertisements realises: i) British (and Western in general) cultures; ii) stereotypes of Japanese culture ('self-images' of Japan).

Section **4.2** will look at the way in which visual lexis in Japanese advertisements (which appear in the Japanese media) realises British (or Western) cultures. I will focus on how visual lexis constructs 'Britishness' (or 'Westerness'), in the context of Japanese culture; that is, I will explore how stereotypes of British (Western) culture is visualised as lexis in Japanese advertisements.

Section **4.3** is concerned with the making and manifestation of 'Japaneseness' in Japanese advertisements in the British media. It is observed that some Japanese companies launch their products in Britain and they often put forward 'self-made' 'Japaneseness'. I will therefore draw attention to the way in which Japanese companies

make use of visual lexis in their advertisements which are aimed at a British market: the focal issue of this section is the self-construction of 'Japaneseness' by Japanese advertisers.

Textual analysis will be carried out with particular reference to the notion of the *signifier* and the *signified* in the denotative and connotative levels which are proposed by Roland Barthes (1967). Through an application of the Barthean model of *signification*, I hope to illustrate how far this type of semiotic analysis enables us to account for the visual manifestation of Japanese and British culture.

In section, **4.4**, in conclusion, I will discuss what the formal representations of these advertisements suggests in terms of particularly Japanese culture and its value systems. In so doing, I will draw on socio-cultural accounts which are relevant to my textual analysis.

4.2 THE REPRESENTATION OF 'BRITISHNESS' AND 'WESTERNESS' IN JAPANESE ADVERTISEMENTS

The aims of section **4.2** are two fold: it is concerned with the way in which i) British culture and ii) Western culture in general are *visually* represented in Japanese advertisements: what and how visual lexis represents Japanese ways of constructing British and Western cultures.

The first section, ***4.2.1***, will draw attention to the way in which 'Britishness' is represented in Japanese advertisements. Here I will use a Japanese advertisement for a 'British-style tea': *Laceby Hall Tea* (Figure 4-1), which is taken from the Japanese women's magazine *More*.

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IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

The second section, ***4.2.2***, is concerned with the visual representation of culturally non-specific 'Westerness': the representation of 'Westerness' with no specific clue to which particular country is depicted in an advertisement. For this purpose, I will be looking at a Japanese poster advertising a swimming pool in a theme park, called *Toshimaen* (Figure 4-2).

4.2.1 'Britishness'

4.2.1.1 Represented participants

First of all, I will draw attention to types of represented participants in this advertisement. There are both human and non-human represented participants in this text. The former includes photographic images of one man and two women, and images of the product (two cans of *Laceby Hall Tea*, placed on the bottom right) and the company logo, which appears above the images of human participants. Regarding verbal represented participants, there is verbal copy that is written vertically in Japanese on the right end of the text and written horizontally in Japanese at the bottom part of the text, beside the images of product.

4.2.1.2 Visual lexis that represents 'Britishness'

In relation to the human represented participants as visual lexis that represent 'things British', there are three human represented participants, who are non-Japanese; this advertisement make use of Western models, dressed in Western style. The use of Western models (who are meant to be British), as opposed to Japanese models, contributes to part of the manifestation of 'Britishness': the use of Western models (who are presented as British) to advertise a Japan-made British-style tea.

These human participants represent a British butler and two house maids. The waistcoat that the 'butler' is wearing has a green tartan checked pattern. The 'maids' are wearing dresses with a bow ribbon with the same tartan pattern as the butler's. This is a visual depiction of what is considered to be a characteristically British occupation (such as 'butler') and the use of tartan check in the outfit of represented participants, which is of Scottish origin, represents one aspect of 'Britishness'.

With respect to the use of non-human represented participants and what it represents about British culture is seen in the use of tartan check. For example, images of the two cans of *Laceby Hall Tea* have a green and black and a red and black tartan check pattern on the surface of the cans. Besides, there is an image above the human represented participants, which makes use of the same green tartan check, on which reads *Laceby Hall Tea*. This image is in the style of a Victorian house plaque, which constructs another aspect of 'Britishness'.

As another example of non-human participants, there are English words, such as *"Laceby Hall"*, *"straight tea"*, *"milk tea"*, placed on the plaque-like logo and in the images of cans of tea. In fact, *Laceby Hall* is the name of the product. This use of the English language itself has a semiotic function, in that the material presence of English words itself represents 'Britishness' in this advertisement, not so much of what these words linguistically (semantically) mean. The physical presence of English words in the context of Japanese advertisements signals 'non-Japaneseness', in the sense that it is not indigenous Japanese language; it becomes a representation of 'Britishness', because of the association: the Roman alphabet = 'Westerness'. In this way, English words are there to be 'looked at' rather than 'to be read to get the meaning of'. This use of English words in the context of Japanese advertisements can be pointed out as one of the strategies to

manifest 'Britishness'.

Finally, I will draw attention to the concept of *tea* as an embodiment of 'Britishness'. When the Japanese talk of *tea*, there is a differentiation between Japanese-style green tea and Western-style tea, and different terms are used for each kind of tea: *kocha* (meaning 'red tea' in Japanese and used for Western-style tea) and *ocha* (Japanese style green tea). *Kocha* in particular has a strong association with 'Britishness' (or at least 'Westerness') to the Japanese mind and it is a prevailing assumption among the Japanese that Britain is a country of origin of the most authentic 'red tea'.

To sum up, this advertisement constructs 'Britishness', through the use of particular signs that are manifested as visual lexis of represented participants. Particular items in visual lexis, such as the British 'butler', a tartan check pattern, Victorian-style house plaque and English words function as *the signifier* of 'Britishness'.

4.2.2 'Westerness' in general

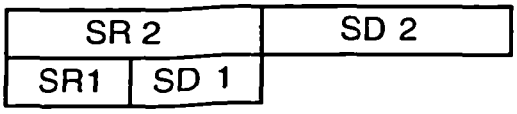
4.2.2.1 Represented participants

Figure 4-2 consists both of visual and verbal represented participants. Visual participants include, as human represented participants, ten female models, who are depicted to be lying on the beach and, as non-human participants, red and green visual elements, placed on top of these human participants. There are verbal participants in two different places in the text: there is Japanese copy that is written vertically on the right edge of the text and the another block of verbal copy on the left top of the text, where there is mixture of vertical and horizontal writing, using both Japanese and English.

4.2.2.2 Visual lexis that represents 'Westerness' in general

First of all, in order to consider how this visual lexis works as a semiotic sign, I will draw close attention to one of the elements of visual lexis in this advertisement: the Western models. Given that the material entity of these Western women is *the signifier*, it follows that *the signifier* is a conceptualised as 'Westerness', in other words, these female bodies *signify* 'Westerness'. It has to be noted that to use Barthes' term, this *signifier* (Western women) has another *signified*, apart from the first order signification of 'Westerness': these female bodies manifest 'a Japanese pancake'. The clue to this proposition lies in that visual represented participants (green dots and red pieces placed on top of the images of the female models) represent ginger shreds and seaweed powder, which are conventionally served as seasoning for a Japanese pancake. Provided this Japanese seasoning is recognised by the viewer, the bodies of the female models (*the signifier*) gains another *signified:* they are now metaphorically taken as 'a Japanese pancake'.

The signifier (bodies of Western female models) has two layers of *signification*: *i)* 'Westerness' *ii)* a metaphorical realisation of Japanese pancake. To borrow the Barthean framework of signification (1967), the signs, in which Western models (*the signifier:* hereafter *SR*) signifies i) and ii) as *the signifieds:* (hereafter *SD*), operates as *the signifier* in relation to *the signified* in the second order signification (what Hjelmslev and then Barthes called the level of *connotation*). Figure 4-3 shows the way in which this visual lexis functions as a sign.



SR 1: Bodies of Women

SD1: i) Western Females

ii) Japanese Pancake

SD2: "Westernness" (juxtaposed with Japanese lexis)

Figure 4-3 The System of Signification in Figure 4-2

It suggests that *SR-1* represents *SD-1* at two different levels and *SD-1* as a Japanese pancake is more 'latently' realised and its recognition as *the signified* requires a culturally shared knowledge: one has to recognise the visual clue of particular pancake seasoning.

SR-1 and *SD-1* consequently, forms *SR-2* ('Western models as a Japanese pancake'), which signifies *SD-2.* The consideration of *SD-2* gives rise to the question why this use a metaphor of Western female models as a Japanese pancake. In other words, if Japanese models, instead of these Western models, had been used to represent a Japanese pancake, what difference would have been made, in terms of semiosis? or more fundamentally: what is the significance of using Western models as *the signifier* in the first place?

I would argue that *SD-2* exemplifies the use of Western model as a 'physical' or 'material' entity, as the attachment of *SD-1-i)* indicates, that they represent 'a Japanese pancake': something to be eaten. In other words, the bodies of Western models in this advertisement are objectified, or reduced to a material entity and to a kind of 'eye-catcher' to draw the viewer's attention.

The reason why the bodies of Western models *can* work as an eye-catcher partially answers the above-mentioned question: the significance of choice of Western models, as opposed to Japanese models. In the context of Japanese advertisements, Western visual lexis, like female models in Figure 4-2, has specific roles to play, that is, something that can draw the viewer's attention or something that 'stands out' as against 'things Japanese'. This illustrates the point that, apart from the use of Western models, the formation of a sign in which *SR-1* signifies *SD-1, ii)* in particular, is another eye-catching factor in this advertisement. This leads to another question of *motivation* between *SR-1* and *SD-1-ii).*

Moeran (1996), in his analysis of Japanese car advertisement, takes the view that the

relationship between *the signifier* and *the signified* tends to become "free-floating", "ready to attach themselves, however briefly, to anything that happens to pass them by". If Moeran's point about the "free-floating" nature of *the signifier* is applied to the case of Figure 4-2, it follows that there is no fixed, established relationship between *SR-1* and *SD-1-ii),* in the sense, for example, that *SD-1-ii)* would have been a French crepe, instead of a Japanese pancake. Put it in other words, Moeran's position denies the concept of the conjunctive nature of *the signifier* and *the signified*, which goes along with the notion of *motivated signs*, as opposed to *arbitrary signs*, claiming that *the signifier* can be detached from its *signified* and can be attached to any other elements *without motivation; in an arbitrary manner*[31].

I take a different view from Moeran on the grounds that every *signifier* is assigned to a particular *signified*, and in the *process* the particular *signifier* becomes endowed with the particular *signified* (let alone the *moment* the process is completed) itself cannot be free from *motivation*, such as by the socio-cultural environment, together with the interest and intention of the sign's producer. Given this, it can be said that *SR-2* is a *motivated sign*, in which *SR-1* and *SD-1* are not connected 'by chance' but they have 'the grounds' for its connection. Western models in Figure 4-2 are used to manifest 'Westerness' (in order to draw the viewer's attention). Also, the fact that this *signifier* (*SR-1*) is combined with another *signified* (*SD-1-ii*) has significant meaning in that it implies a particular use of Westerners as 'material entity' or 'object' rather than a 'human' entity. None of these *motivations* in this Japanese advertisement is unrelated to the socio-cultural environment that determines the making of Japanese visual representations.

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[31] Williamson (1978) takes a similar view as Moeran in that she considers this 'free-attaching' of the signifier is where one of the strategies of advertisements lies.

To sum up, the part that this Japanese advertisement makes use of Western visual lexis itself is a manifestation of ideology, which lies beyond the textual level of this particular advertisement. The use of western female models suggests desirability of the physical entity of Western females (enough to be compared to a pancake) as well as a particular value that these Western visual lexis convey in the context of Japanese visual representations, which is a sense of modernity as opposed to traditionality.

4.3 THE REPRESENTATION OF 'JAPANESENESS' IN JAPANESE ADVERTISEMENTS IN BRITAIN

In this section, I will focus on the functions of visual lexis as a resource of representing 'Japaneseness' (which implies Japanese culture, people and society) in Japanese advertisements in Britain: Japanese advertisements launched in Britain. I will use two different campaigns (both are beer advertisements) by Japanese brewery companies for beers called *Kirin* and *Asahi.*

With *Kirin Lager Beer*, I will take up a series of advertisements with the aim of examining the way in which visual lexis manifests 'Japaneseness' in human (section ***4.3.1.1***), non-human (section ***4.3.1.2***), and verbal (section ***4.3.1.3***) participants. Figure 4-4, Figure 4-5, Figure 4-6 appeared in the British women's magazines: *ELLE, Marie Claire* and *Cosmopolitan,* respectively.

The advertisement for the *Asahi Super Dry Beer* (Figure 4-7), appeared on the back cover of the entertainment listings magazine for London *Time Out.* I will be looking at this advertisement from a perspective of the representation of Japanese aesthetic traditions: a traditional aspect of 'Japaneseness'.

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4.3.1 'Japaneseness' and cultural stereotypes

4.3.1.1 Human represented participants

First of all, I will draw attention to human visual represented participants in the three examples. All the texts use images of a (Japanese-looking) man, dressed in traditional medieval Japanese armour who has a bottle of *Kirin Lager Beer* in his left hand. (In Figure 4-4, he has, on top of a bottle of beer, a microphone in his right hand.) In Figure 4-4, there are images of two (Japanese-looking) women dressed in the traditional Japanese *kimono*, who are singing into a microphone placed in front of them. Thirteen people are represented behind the image of the man in armour in Figure 4-5. There are images of human participants, who are dressed in Western style clothes (such as T-shirt and jeans), apart from one woman, who is dressed in a *kimono*.

The question is: what do these visual participants (*the signifiers*) signify?; how do these visual lexis function as signs that represents 'Japaneseness'? First of all, it may be said that the depiction of a Japanese man in the medieval armour signifies 'traditional Japan'. The images of Japanese women can be a representation of *geisha girls*, which is considered one of the stereotypes of Japanese culture in the West. (This is indicated by their special hair style and make-up on their faces.) In this respect, these images of a man with several women are manifesting Japanese people in anything but the contemporary style. It has to be noted, however, that in Figure 4-4, the man and women are depicted to be singing *karaoke*, which is a relatively modern Japanese technological invention exported from Japan.

4.3.1.2 Non-human represented participants

In Figure 4-4, there is an image of medieval Japanese castle, while Figure 4-5 has an

image of a snow-capped Mount Fuji in the background. Figure 4-6 shows three different settings in which the Japanese man is located: Britain (London with 'Big Ben'), Egypt (Cairo, which is indicated by an image of pyramids) and the Caribbean (with the help of verbal copy).

As in the depiction of people in traditional costume, a medieval Japanese style castle signifies 'old Japan', as opposed to 'contemporary Japan'. The image of a snow-capped mountain can be read as *the signifier* 'Mount Fuji' (which can be regarded as another *lexis* that represents Japan). The three places in which the Japanese man appears might be suggesting the scope of Japanese business, in other words, a widely spread Japanese business 'territory'. It can be said therefore that the Japanese man represents a 'business warrior' and in this sense, the armour is metaphorically used as *the signifier* of Japanese business men, who launch their business world wide aggressively, or that this drink can be enjoyed anywhere in the world even outside Japan.

4.3.1.3 Verbal represented participants

Throughout these three examples, verbal participants can be divided into two categories: English copy (which appears in red letters with a white background) and Japanese copy (such as the masthead). Given that these advertisements appeared in British media, where most of the viewers are likely to be non-Japanese speakers, the latter type of verbal elements are likely to have a pictorial function, rather than linguistic (semantic) function. In other words, these Japanese letters (although they are linguistic elements to Japanese speakers) can be taken as a variation of visual entities, to the eye of non-Japanese speakers (who account for the great majority of viewers of the text). It follows therefore that the Japanese writing in these advertisements serve as *the signifier* that represents

'non-Britishness' (and also 'Japaneseness'). The physical appearance of the Japanese letters, or in other words, the Japanese writing as a 'material entity' matters more than what the writing itself means *linguistically*[32].

As the discussion of Figure 4-4, Figure 4-5 and Figure 4-6 have suggested so far, there is visual lexis that represents 'traditional Japan', such as a Japanese man in the medieval armour, a depiction of *geisha* women and an image of a Japanese castle. It can be argued that visual lexis, such as Mount Fuji, is a representation of 'Japanese beauty'. Apart from these two aspect of 'Japaneseness', 'modern Japan', which is characterised by its advanced technology and world-wide business, is represented by the reference to *karaoke* (Figure 4-4) and a symbolic use of 'business warrior' travelling across countries (Figure 4-6). However, as far as these *Kirin* advertisements are concerned, it can be argued that the overall use of visual lexis emphasises more the traditional aspect of 'Japaneseness' rather than technological and economic aspects of *Japaneseness*.

4.3.2 'Japaneseness' in the aesthetic domain

4.3.2.1 Represented participants

This advertisement is characterised by its prominent use of verbal represented participants which outnumber visual ones. In fact, there is only one visual represented participant in Figure 4-7, which is an image of product (a bottle of *Asahi Super Dry*

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[32]When verbal elements function *linguistically* it can be called *verbal lexis* (–semantic entity of language). *Verbal lexis* is not the focus of this chapter, but it has to be noted that an English word that appears in the shirts of human participants in Figure 4-5, *flend* is functioning as *the signifier* of an English concept *friend* (*the signified*). Given that the misuse of English word *friend* by spelling it *flend* is getting at the general problem of English pronunciation of */l/* and *r/* sound among Japanese speakers of English, the word *flend* works as a *sign* that signifies one aspect of 'Japaneseness'.

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Beer), placed on the bottom right part of the text. As verbal participants, on the other hand, there are both English and Japanese copy in this advertisement: the former appears at the bottom of the text and reads, *"150 years ago we didn't have a brewing industry. We didn't make cars either"*. Below this copy is the company logo *Asahi* and the sub-copy, *"Japanese and proud of it"*. The latter consists of two parts: a copy, which is written vertically, on the right edge of the text and a calligraphic character in the middle of the text. The vertical copy is a Japanese translation of the English copy, *"150 years ago... "*, and the calligraphic character means 'rich' or 'prosperous' in Japanese.

4.3.2.2 Verbal element as visual lexis that represents 'Japaneseness'

I will now particularly focus on the verbal elements in this advertisement which I see as a manifestation of 'Japaneseness'. I would argue that these verbal elements (the verbal copy in calligraphic letters) has a *cross-modal* characteristic: these elements can function either as the verbal or as the visual and this is where a crucial point of the representation of 'Japaneseness' lies.

Considering that this Japanese advertisement appears in a British magazine, which suggests that the majority of viewers are non-Japanese, the Japanese copy: verbal elements which are written in Japanese, can have a pictorial function as opposed to linguistic (semantic) function. Namely, to the eye of non-Japanese speakers, these Japanese writings appear as visual images rather than language that provides linguistic meaning (as the English copy does). In this respect, verbal participants that have a *pictorial function* can be considered as one variation of visual lexis, depending on the context in which a given text is read. (c.f. the use of Japanese language as a pictorial function in Figure 4-4, Figure 4-5, Figure 4-6). In the case of Figure 4-5 - Figure 4-7, the

context of British media allows this (originally) verbal elements to function as a pseudo-visual element, a variation of visual lexis.

Now I would like to focus more closely on the Japanese calligraphic writing as a semiotic sign that represent 'Japaneseness'. Figure 4-8 shows the relationship between *the signifier* and *the signified* that construct the *sign* 豊 . The character 豊 as a material entity (*SR-1*) has two possible *signifieds:* i) and ii). *SD-1*-i) is a concept that the character represents ('wealth', 'prosperity') and this is applied only in the context, where the linguistic meaning of this Japanese character is understood. *SD-1-ii)* is applied in the case that the Japanese meaning of the character remains 'incomprehensible' as in the context of British media (where non-Japanese speakers are the great majority of viewers), therefore this is a realisation of *linguistically blank* concept. (For the present analysis, it is *SD-1-i)* that is relevant, because this advertisement did appear in the British media.) However, it has to be noted that this *blankness* carries different meaning instead: the presence of the Chinese character realises (to the non-user of Japanese language) 'Orientalness' in a broader sense.

At the second level of signification, *SR-2* (*the signifier* 豊 with a pictorial function) signifies one aspect of 'Japaneseness', in the domain of traditional art form: calligraphy. Thus, the calligraphic character 豊 , in the context of British media, comes to gain a semiotic function as *the signifier* of 'Japaneseness' (or at least 'Orientalness'). In this respect, this advertisement of Japanese beer takes advantage of the characteristic of calligraphic writing, that is, semiotically, it can be placed between language and a visual image.

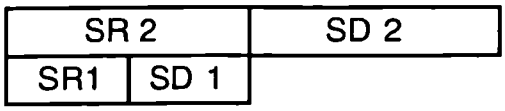

Figure 4-8 The System of Signification in Figure 4-7

SR 1: the material entity 豊

SD1: i) "richness"
"prosperity"
ii) Oriental character

SD2: "Japaneseness" as traditional art form

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have looked at how visual lexis functions as *the signifier* that represents cultural specificness of Britain and the West in general (Section **4.2**) and Japan (Section **4.3**). Figure 4-1 exemplifies how an advertisement can manifest 'Britishness' through visual lexis such as 'tartarn check', an image of a British butler. These visually represented participants function as a sign that represents 'Britishness', as long as these visual items are recognised and established as a *signifier* of 'Britishness'. It can be argued that visual representations of a given culture are an ideological manifestation, which is constructed in a certain cultural context. For example, the Japanese advertisement (Figure 4-1) exemplifies a construction of 'Britishness' through a particular choice of visual lexis that can function as *the signifier* of 'Britishness'.

The use of westerners, particularly the material entity of westerners as *the signifier* of 'Westerness' can be pointed out as one of the characteristics of Japanese advertisements. As Figure 4-2 shows, there is the use of Western visual lexis for the construction of Japanese advertisements, and the use of Western visual lexis in Japanese advertisements

can manifest, as Creighton (1995) argues, Occidentalism.

In the discourse of Occidentalism, Western visual lexis is treated as *hakurai-hin* (meaning 'something that came from abroad'), which implies 'Japanese appreciation of 'things Western'. Wilkinson (1990) argues that this appreciation of 'things Western' has led to the Japanese perception of the West as "an exot c, idealistic, *cultural model*"[33].

With respect to the representation of 'Japaneseness' seen in Japanese advertisements; the way in which visual lexis is used, I would like to use visual lexis as *the signifier* of 'Japaneseness' in terms of two different aspects of 'Japaneseness', as Figure 4-9 shows.

Visual lexis in the middle column (such as 'a Japanese castle' and 'geisha girls') represents 'Japaneseness' from a traditional perspective and visual lexis in the right hand column represents Japan as 'modern', 'Westernised' and 'technologically advanced'.

Wilkinson (1990) says that there are two different "channels", through which stereotypical 'images' of Japan are conveyed to the West: 'high culture' (which "takes a form of literature, opera, traditional art") and 'popular culture'. He also associates the latter channel with younger generation of the West, " Young generations are more likely to have had some direct experience with one or another manifestation of Japanese culture, usually impeccably-styled consumer goods rather than traditional arts (Ibid:148)". In this sense, it may be said that visual lexis that represents 'traditional aspects of 'Japaneseness' is longer established as *the signifier* of 'Japaneseness' in the West, compared to the other type of 'Japaneseness' ('modern, technological Japan').

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[33] Wilkinson (ibid) also argues that Japan has always had a *cultural model* to look up up to and learn from: it began with China (through Buddhism), then Europe (through Christianity), until it reaches the time when Japan was subjected to a flow of American influence after the Second World war. Therefore, the latest *cultural model* to Japan is the United States.

visual lexis as *the signifier*	-Japanese castle (Fig.4-4) -medieval armour -geisha girls (Fig.4-4) -Mt. Fuji (Fig.4-5) -Calligraphy (Figure 4-7)	-karaoke (Figure 4-4) -Beer (brewery) (Figure 4-7)
"channels" of processes (Wilkinson 1990)	'high culture'	'popular culture'
domain in which 'Japaneseness' is represented	-historical / traditional art -aesthetic values	-contemporary technology -Westernised, modern Japan

Figure 4-9 ***Signifiers of "Japaneseness"***

It has to be noted here that the ultimate significance lies in the fact that both types of *signifiers* of 'Japaneseness' are made use of by the Japanese themselves (Japanese companies). In other words, the examples (Figure 4-5, Figure 4-6 and Figure 4-7) that I have looked at in this chapter are representation of 'Japaneseness' by the Japanese companies.

Moeran (1991) sees a phenomenon, what he calls, Counter-orientalism, in the way in which Japanese companies manifest 'Japaneseness' in their advertisements targeted at the British market. He argues that there is a tendency for Japanese companies to make use of traditionally negative traits[34] of Orientalist discourse and give them a positive sense, in order to meet their commercial purpose: to promote their products and services. For example, physical smallness can be transformed into the positive selling point of

[34] Moeran refers to Said's *Orientalism* (1972), in which Said argues that the East has always been a construction of the West, or the system of thought for the West to dominate and 'restructure' the East. Moeran particularly focus on the negative traits that are claimed by *Orientalist,* such as physical smallness, 'backward' culture and incomprehensible (to the West) religion and philosophical orientation, together with different writing systems (from Western alphabetical system) used in the East.

'compactness', and a different type of writing can function as a representation of 'exoticness' (e.g. Figure 4-7) for commercial purposes.

Moeran believes that modern Japan's possession of advanced technology plays a crucial role in the construction of Counter-orientalism:

> Technology has been central to the potency of its [the West] modernity. And now, it [the West] fears, the loss of its technological hegemony may be associated with its cultural 'emasculation'. High technology has become associated with Japaneseness...If the future is technological, and if technology has become 'Japanised', then the syllogism would suggest that the future is now Japanese too....Japan is the future, and it is a future that seems to be transcending and displacing Western modernity. In so far as a nation's sense of identity has become confused with its technological capability, these developments have, of course, had profoundly disturbing and destablishing consequences in Europe and the United States....As the dynamism of technological innovation has appeared to move eastward, so have these postmodern technologies structured into the discourse of Orientalism. Through these new contradictory stereotypes of Japaneseness have assumed new forms; the new technologies have become associated with the sense of Japanese identity and ethnicity. One response is to see pachinko and computer games simply as the postmodern equivalents of Zen and kabuki. Like 'traditional' forms of Japanese culture, they too embody the exotic, enigmatic and mysterious essence of Japanese particularism.

Moeran, like Wilkinson, also views the representations of 'Japaneseness' from two different levels: traditional Japan versus modern, contemporary Japan. It can be argued that Moeran's way of perceiving 'Japaneseness' is still within 'Western-oriented' discourse although he makes a clear distinction between Orientalism and Counter-orientalism, claiming that the latter is a dynamism emanating from Japanese culture; it is Japanese culture that initiates this new movement in relation to the West. I would argue that as long as the point of departure of this new discourse, Counter-orientalism, remains in Orientalism, it can never be established as strictly 'Japanese made Japaneseness'.

In conclusion, this chapter has focused on the Ideational metafunction of semiosis: in

particular, the representation of participants as a unit of signs. I have examined the way in which signs construct cultural specificness ('Japaneseness', 'Britishness' and 'Westerness' in general). As I discussed in section **4.4**, these signs are reinforced by their repetitive use and finally become a part of cultural stereotypes.

My textual analysis in this chapter has also attempted to demonstrate that a Barthean approach to signs can be operated at the lexical level of visual representations. In the following chapters (Chapters V and VI) I will therefore consider how much the syntactical aspects of visual semiotics realise cultural specificness, with reference to other semiotic metafunctions: the Textual and the Interpersonal. Based on the findings of these two chapters on visual syntax, I will then revisit some examples I have dealt with in this chapter in order to re-focus on them from a syntactical perspective, rather than a lexical perspective.

Chapter V VISUAL SYNTAX 1: Directionality and Use of Space

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the Ideational metafunction of semiosis in terms of the representation of lexis as a unit of signs: the Ideational metafunction as a resource for representing participants. This chapter will focus on another aspect of the Ideational metafunction and on the Textual metafunction as realised through visual representation. My reason for dealing with the two functions within the same chapter is that they are inseparable elements in the consideration of semiosis. The former, the Ideational metafunction, is concerned with processes in which represented participants are realised. The latter, the Textual metafunction, relates to textual organization: how visual elements are distributed in a given space and how overall meaning is constructed.

In relation to the Ideational metafunction, I will be focusing on *processes* realised in visual elements: *Visual directionality* (section **5.3**). I will discuss visual directionality at two different levels: *Inherent directionality* (***5.3.2***) and *Vectorial directionality* (***5.3.3***). The former is concerned with the kind of directionality that is embodied within a given visual element, in other words, the visual directionality that each visual lexis encapsulates. The latter type of visual directionality is realised when items of visual lexis (which embodies *Inherent directionality* within it) are located or positioned in relation to the larger environment in which they occur. (This distinguishes *Vectorial directionality* from the vectorial relations established between specific features, what I have referred to as a *transitivity* system.)

With respect to the Textual metafunction, section **5.4**, I will be exploring meaning

distribution within a visual space: how a particular part of visual space is used to realise a particular kind of meaning. This section examines what kind of meaning potential each domain of visual space has in a particular culture. I will be discussing this issue from a cross-cultural perspective, namely, in the comparison of the use of space in Japanese and British examples.

I will be looking at the distribution of meanings in visual space in terms of three features of textual organization: Left/Right (***5.4.2***); Top/Bottom (***5.4.3***); Centre/Margins (***5.4.4***). In section ***5.4.2*** I will compare what kind of visual elements are placed in the domain of Left/Right in both Japanese and British texts, and see what this suggests in terms of cultural implications. Section ***5.4.3*** is concerned with the use of the top and bottom part of the visual space, which realises certain ontological distinctions in each of the two cultures. The third feature of textual organisation is to do with *centrality*; how the central part of the text (the Centre) is used to realise certain meanings in comparison to the peripheral part (the *Margins*). My discussion in this section will explore the hypothesis that centrality is more a characteristic of Japanese visual semiotics than British visual semiotics.

Before the descriptive analysis of *Visual directionality* and the *Use of space*, with reference to actual examples, I will give a brief account of the Japanese writing system in section **5.2**, on the grounds that visual directionality is involved not only with the visual semiotic as in images but also with the visual appearance of written language. Without a discussion of the directionality of writing systems in any language, it is more difficult to consider the issue of *directionality* in general texts of the kind I am investigating.

5.2 WRITING SYSTEMS

Language, when it is *written,* as opposed to when it is spoken, is realised as a physical and graphic substance in a given space. In this sense, language can be treated as a *visual entity.* Thus when one looks at an advertisement which consists of both visual images and verbal captions, both elements (regardless of the type of medium: visual or verbal) come into the viewer's eye as a visual entity, as a block of visual material and a block of language as text. The visual, whether as image or as a block of language has semantic impact at that initial level: the viewer goes on to read the visual and recognise the linguistic meaning of the verbal captions. At the next level of analysis, the visual and the verbal are each treated in terms of their own 'semantics', the semantics of the visual as image and semantics of the verbal as linguistic message.

In Figure 5-1, I distinguished two kinds of visual directionality: i) that realised by visual images (*'pictorial directionality'*) and ii) that realised by language (*'scriptorial directionality'*).

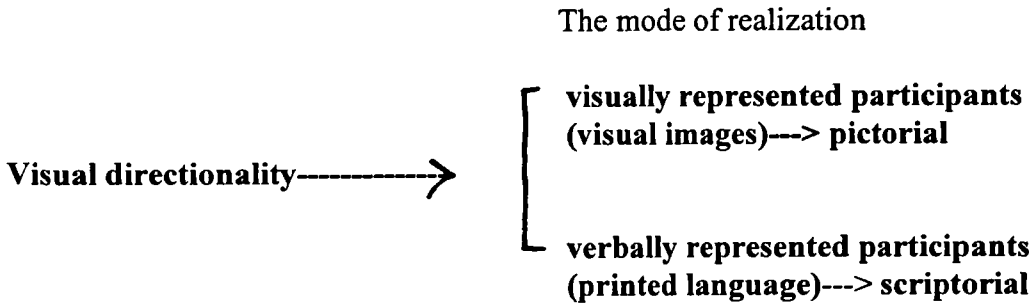

Figure 5-1 ***Types of visual directionality***

The historical complexity of the Japanese system of writing makes it necessary to discuss it in relation to the Ideational, the Textual and the Interpersonal metafunction. I focus on

two aspects in relation to the Japanese system of writing: that of choices in *writing directions* and that of *writing units.*

First, the range of writing directions available in Japanese are these: whereas English has a single way of writing: in rows; and from left to right, horizontally, with the rows ordered from top to bottom, using the letters of the Roman alphabets. Japanese has two choices of writing direction : *horizontally* in rows and *vertically* in columns. I call the former type *horizontal writing* and the latter *vertical writing.*

The horizontal writing proceeds in rows and from left to right as English, which creates the visual directionality of left to right. Vertical writing is written from top to bottom and each column proceeds from right to left. Horizontal writing creates the visual directionality of left to right (as an individual row), which guides the viewer's reading direction from top to bottom as a sequence of rows. Vertical writing creates the visual directionality of top to bottom (as an individual column), and also produces the viewer's reading direction from right to left as a sequence of columns.

In Japanese writing, horizontal and vertical writing forms can be juxtaposed within a single text. The use of multiple writing directions gives a text multiple visual directionality at the level of scriptorial directionality. (For example, an advertisement in Figure 4-2 makes use of both forms of writing: the main copy, which is placed at the edge of the right hand side corner of the text, is written using vertical writing and the rest of the copy is written horizontally.)

Vertical writing is the older form of writing in Japanese, and consequently, can embody a sense of 'traditionality'. It can be used therefore as a signifier to imply Japanese 'authenticity' or 'indigenity'' as opposed to that suggested by the horizontal way of writing, which suggests a western influence in the modern history of Japan: a

sense of 'Westerness' that is at the same time that of 'modernity'. This type of writing is preferred among post-war generations, who are more strongly influenced by western cultures than older generations (Haarmann:1986).

The choice of writing direction serves three metafunctions: the Ideational, the Textual and the Interpersonal. For example, the writing direction may suggest a dynamic vectorial process, which is the Ideational metafunction. The choice between vertical and horizontal writing also realises a sense of 'traditionality' or 'modernity' and 'Westernisation', which is related to the Interpersonal metafunction (as I will demonstrate in Chapter VI). The particular choice of writing direction can guide a viewer's readings of the directionality of a page as a whole, or direct reading in certain ways: this serves the Textual metafunction.

Second, the Japanese system has a choice of several types of *writing units*: the Interpersonal metafunction. Japanese writing makes use of characters (*kanji*) and two kinds of syllabaries called *kana: hiragana* and *katakana*. Each of the *kana* consists of fifty-four letters. Two types of *kanas* serve distinctive purposes: *hiragana*, which makes use of round, curved lines in its shapes, serves grammatical purposes in sentences: it is used for items such as articles and auxiliaries. *Katakana*, on the other hand, is characterised by its angular shapes; it is often used to write foreign words.

This characteristic of the Japanese writing system allows a number of choices for linguistic representation, in terms of 'channels of realisation'. For example, it is possible to write a sentence using either *hiragana* or *katakana* alone or as a combination of two of them (*hiragana* and *katakana*) together with *kanji* (Chinese characters), depending on the type of writing.

The relative proportion of *kanji* used within a piece of writing (either at the sentence

level or passage level) is one of the factors that realises the degree of formality. Formal writing has a higher proportion of *kanji*. The use of *kanji* is therefore closely related to the genre of writing. Legal documents, for instance, have a higher proportion of *kanji* than other types of writing, such as personal letters and children's writing.

Children start learning to write using only *hiragana* and *katakana,* and the more advanced the level of writing, the greater proportion of *kanjis* he or she can mix with these *kanas.* In the usual writing of Japanese adults, both *kanji* and *kana* are mixed. If the writing consists only of *kana,* it gives the text a sense of 'unaccomplished' or 'childish' writing, in comparison with standard, 'accepted', or 'adult-like' writing style.

The physical appearance of these three writing systems has significant implications in terms of the Interpersonal metafunction of visual semiosis. Compared with *kana, kanji* has a higher density of visual elements on the page. Consequently, writing with a higher proportion of *kanji* is *visually* more dense than texts with a lower proportion of *kanji.* Given that the use of *kanji* is one marker of formality, the visual density created by the choice of writing systems is another semiotic feature contributing to the degree of formality. This, again leads to one aspect of realization of textual genre. Writing with a higher visual density means for users of the Japanese language, a high degree of formality, which serves the Interpersonal metafunction. Therefore, in Japanese, the degree of formality in writing can be manifested 'visually' by the choice and combination of these three writing methods.

5.3 DIRECTIONALITY: The Ideational Metafunction

In this section, I will be focusing on the issue of *Visual directionality* in general. I divide

that into two categories: *Inherent directionality* and *Vectorial directionality.* My distinction of *Inherent* and *Vectorial directionality* attempts to deal with what I consider to be at one level two distinct semiotic phenomena in the visual dimension.

Inherent directionality is a kind of directionality that is embodied within a given element or that encapsulates in itself a sense of dynamics ('potential dynamics'). For example, an image of a man walking towards the left creates the *Inherent directionality* of right to left, in that the visual element itself embodies the directionality within it. An image of an aeroplane flying towards the right represents the *Inherent directionality* of left to right.

In section ***5.3.1***, as an example of the realisation of *Inherent directionality*, I begin with a discussion of the *isotype.* Then I move on to deal with specific instances that exemplify the use of *Inherent directionality,* with the aim of demonstrating the way in which this type of directionality reveals similarity and difference between Japanese and British visual semiotics.

When these visual elements are considered in context, where they are positioned in relation to the larger environment in which they occur*: Vectorial directionality. Vectorial directionality* will be discussed in section ***5.3.2***, where I will take up Japanese and British advertising texts. I will consider how Japanese and British examples make use of *Vectorial directionality* as a syntactical resource for the manifestation of a sense of 'positiveness', and 'forward dynamics'.

5.3.1 Inherent directionality

I choose the *isotype* as a starting point of my textual analysis because it can be depicted as a single represented participant, in other words, as a unit of visual lexis, not in

connection to other visual elements in a given textual environment. In this sense, it may be said that the isotype encapsulates a potential dynamics within itself.

The isotype is a system established by the Viennese philosopher and social scientist Otto von Neurath (1937, 1948). It is a system where modified and simplified visual images are used to convey information to the general public. Von Neurath believed this system to be universally communicative, as opposed to the opacity of verbal language, which he viewed as "a disfiguring medium for knowledge" in that "its structure and vocabulary fail to be a consistent, logical model of objects and relations in the physical world" (Lupton 1989:145).

Lupton (ibid) argues that, in order to "provide a universal bridge between language and nature", the isotype has to be reduced to an abstract representation, while sustaining the 'vocabulary', which is done at the cost of weakening the relationship between the image and the actual object. Another aspect of the isotype that makes it "universally acceptable" is as Lupton states, its *consistency*. The isotype can visualise the same concept across cultures. For example, to realise the concept 'exit', it is possible to use similar visual images regardless of the context in which they are used. The question arises here: can isotype representation be completely culturally neutral?

Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 show Japanese and British isotypes, respectively, which indicate the presence of an exit. Both of them realise the same meaning (*"exit this way"*), but they are realised with different visual directionality. In the case of Figure 5-2, the orientation of the image of the human figure is to the left, while in Figure 5-3, the orientation of the represented participant is in the opposite direction. If, as von Neurath suggested, the isotype provides universality in the manifestation of visual information, the question arises regarding this difference in visual directionality: how can this

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difference in visual directionality be explained?

It is this feature which makes the isotype a useful starting point. As a sign, it is meant to be universal, yet its spatial orientation differs in the two cultures. My hypothesis is that the lexical aspects (the lexical content) are independently variable in relation to spatial orientation, and that the latter realises deep cultural configurations of the visual semiotic. Spatial orientation, right to left, or left to right, creates, implicitly, an indication of directionality.

Apart from the two examples I have discussed so far, visual images based on isotype-like figures can be found in the context of everyday life, such as in public signs for road work, leaflets and posters in the street and so on. Figures 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6 were all found in public places in Yokohama, Japan. Figure 5-4 is an instruction on a pillar, to warn of the step at the end of an escalator, which has a human figure stumbling at an obstacle, pointing to the left. Figure 5-5 is a warning 'Watch Your Step' at the site of road work. This isotype is similar to Figure 5-4, in terms of the visual directionality that the human figure creates. Figure 5-6 is a public instruction for a no-parking area. Visual directionality of right to left is created by the image of the bicycle and the motorbike with their front pointing towards the left. Thus, these examples (Figures 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6) have in common a visual directionality of right to left. The visually represented participants, such as abstract human figures and the image of the bicycle and motorbike, encapsulate the visual directionality of right to left within themselves. The directionality of right to left, in this way, might be one of the characteristics of Japanese visual representations. It follows that the isotype, which was invented as a universal common ground of communication, actually can never be free from cultural specificity in its visual directionality. I now move on to instances which have features which are isotype-like

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in certain aspects.

Figure 5-7 is the cover page of the University of London Union Student Guidebook (1996). The text consists largely of isotype-like human figures. The visual directionality of these figures is left to right, which is consistent with the scriptorial directionality, which says, *"essential student guide 1996, published by the University of London Union"*. The visual images and language have the same directionality (of left to right).

Figure 5-8 is the front page of a leaflet for public transport in the Tokyo area, called *Narita Express*, which is the Japanese equivalent of the Gatwick Express in Britain. It connects central Tokyo with Narita International Airport. This is a leaflet written in English, which is, most likely, targeted at non-Japanese speaking customers; it is translated from the original Japanese version. At the top of the text, there is the corporate identity logo of this public service. It consists of an abstract image of an aeroplane (an isotype-like representation), and the word N'EX, using Roman letters. The visual image of the aeroplane is pointing towards the left, creating the visual directionality of right to left, while scriptorial directionality is left to right.

These isotypes (Figures 5-2 to 5-8) have demonstrated the way in which *Inherent directionality* realises the Ideational metafunction. I will now show how directionality works more widely by drawing attention to another type of visual directionality: *Vectorial directionality* which is realised by represented participants in relation to the larger environment in which they appear.

5.3.2 Vectorial directionality

Vectorial directionality can be treated as a spatial metaphor of "temporal progression" (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996), and it is also possible for vectors, together with a

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meaning of *progression*, to realise a movement towards something *better* and *positive*. For example, *Vectorial directionality* can allow a given represented participant to be 'heading for' something *better* or more *positive*. In this sense, visual directionality can manifest a sequence of status as well a temporal sequence.

5.3.2.1 Forward (positive) directionality in Japanese advertisements

Figure 5-9 is from an opening advertising campaign of *Keikyu Department Store*, in Yokohama, Japan. The human represented participants, in the middle band of the text, are depicted as though they were rushing towards the left. This creates the pictorial visual directionality of right to left. The possible implication of this directionality is that people (the human represented participants) are hurrying, running to something worthwhile, which is expected to be somewhere to the left. 'Something worthwhile' might be the opening of this department store, and this is why these people are in a hurry.

Figure 5-10 is another Japanese example in which a represented participant realises the visual directionality of right to left. This is an advertisement from *Sumitomo Bank,* for its instant loan service. There is a cartoon image of a black bear, which is walking towards the left, creating the visual directionality of right to left. Next to the cartoon bear is a verbal caption, which says, "Sumitomo card is always on my side and that's definitely something that I can rely on".

The cartoon bear is represented to be doing the *right* ('sensible') action; now that the cartoon bear has this card, the message is that, he is heading in the 'right', 'forward', or 'positive' direction, in the sense that he can rely on this loan service, even in an emergency. It can be argued therefore that the visual directionality of right to left (which is realised by the image of cartoon character) manifests 'positive' values in the context

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of this Japanese advertisement.

5.3.2.2 Forward (positive) directionality in British advertisements

So far I have examined how 'forward' directionality is realised in Japanese examples. I will now focus on the way in which British advertisements realise 'forward' directionality through the depiction of represented participants. Figures 5-11 and 5-12 are both poster advertisements taken from the *Evening Standard* newspaper. They make use of visual directionality with a 'negative' or 'backward' implication, in order to make the 'positive' and 'forward' direction stand out. In other words, these advertisements attempt to make a selling point from giving represented participants the visual directionality with 'negative' implications,

The copy in Figure 5-11 reads, *"Looking for something better suited to your talents?"*, with a cartoon image of an elephant with glasses and a tie, with a smug expression on its face, followed by a man with a sulky-looking face, carrying a shovel and a bucket. This is a symbolic representation of a boss and his subordinate at work, where the latter is pushed around by the former; a work environment which is far from satisfactory on the part of the subordinate. The man, who is behind the boss, realises the visual directionality of right to left. That this is a depiction of an unwanted situation, or that this is not how it ought to be, is being formally shown by this directionality of right to left (realised by 'the man in trouble') as something 'negative'. In other words, in the context of British advertisements, an unwanted and negative sense is realised by the visual directionality of right to left. This 'negative' visual directionality of right to left is based on the 'forward' and 'positive' directionality of left to right.

A similar message in terms of the implication of visual directionality is conveyed in

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the other example (Figure 5-12). This is an image of a boy on a skateboard, facing towards the left. In fact, the verbal copy reinforces this point: *"Are you going in the right direction?"*, making an explicit point that the boy is *not* going in the right direction. Here as with Figure 5-11, a sense of 'negativeness' is visually expressed by the use of the visual directionality of right to left.

In this way, the visual representation of visual directionality which is read as 'negative' in Figure 5-11 and 5-12 sheds light on what is 'forward' and 'positive' directionality in the context of British advertisements. The visual directionality of right to left, which implies a negative sense in the context of British advertisements, would have realised a different meaning in the context of Japanese advertisements: where the visual directionality of right to left manifests a sense of 'positiveness', in Japan both participants (a man trailing behind an elephant as his boss, a boy on the skateboard) are *already* in the *right* direction. Both Figure 5-11 and Figure 5-12 prove that visual directionality is not merely a formal property, which is given to represented participants, but realises the core meaning of the advertising message.

5.3.3 Summary

I have focused on one aspect of the Ideational metafunction: visual directionality as processes embodied in represented participants. Examples that I have dealt with so far have suggested that the visual directionality of right to left is prominent in Japanese visual representations, while British examples have a tendency to realise the visual directionality of left to right. Each directionality correlates with the scriptorial directionality of its language, the traditional way of writing Japanese and that of English.

This correlation between scriptorial directionality and pictorial directionality could

be explained by an assumption that both Japanese and English writing systems are realisations of the underlying spatial semiosis of each culture. In other words, given that language is one of many semiotic modes which are involved in human communication, it may be possible to postulate that directionality of language (writing) is governed by an underlying spatial semiosis, which also governs the visual mode.

The difference of the prominent directionality between Japanese and British examples indicates each culture has a different (and separate) underlying spatial semiotic system, which influences and determines the existing semiotic modes in use in that culture. It may be said that the visual directionality of right to left is one manifestation of the underlying spatial semiotic system of Japanese culture, while the directionality of left to right is rooted in a different spatial semiotic system, which is characteristic of Anglophone cultures. Figure 5-13 is an abstract representation of underlying spatial semiosis of each culture.

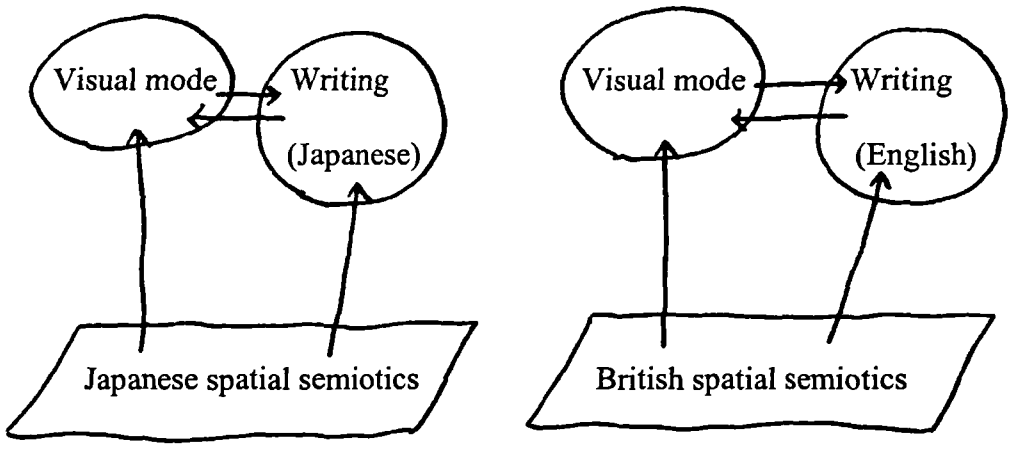


Figure 5-13 ***Underlying spatial semiotic***

Given that each culture has a specific underlying spatial semiotic system, it follows that the difference in visual directionality between Japanese and British examples is not

merely a formal distinction. Formal structure, like visual directionality, can itself manifest cultural implications. The differences in visual directionality are culturally *motivated.* In other words, visual directionality embodies the cultural metaphor of direction.

5.4 USE OF SPACE: The Textual Metafunction

The aim of this section is to explore, in relation to specific examples, how visual space is used to realise specific kinds of meanings: the meaning potential of the distribution of Left/Right; Top/Bottom; Centre/Margins in visual space. This phenomena will also be described from a cross-cultural perspective. I will examine what similar or different spatial distributions in Japanese examples have in comparison to British examples.

The first section (***5.4.1***) will focus on what kind of meaning is realised in the Left/Right part of a given text, with reference to the notion of the Information value of Given and New proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996). I will be using a set of Japanese and British examples in order to compare the distribution of meaning between Given and New, in terms of the three distinct realisations of temporal process (section ***5.4.1.1***), the placement of salient elements (section ***5.4.1.2***) and the distribution of knowledge (section ***5.4.1.3***).

The first category, discussed in ***5.4.1.1***, is to do with the way in which the realisation of visual elements placed in the left or the right part of the space create a sense of temporal sequence: the Left/Right distribution is considered as a realisation of 'before' and 'after'. The second category ***5.4.1.2*** will be focusing on the way in which the Left and Right division of visual space can be used for the representation of what is salient

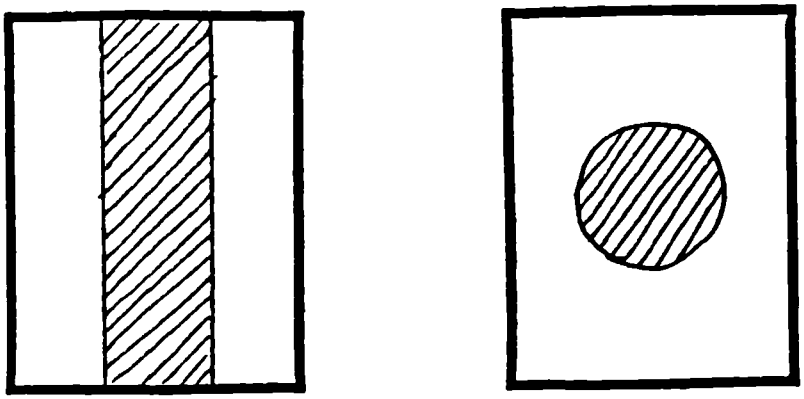
and less salient elements in Japanese and British advertisements. I will examine the Left/Right distribution in relation to the positioning of salient elements in the texts. For the third category, ***5.4.1.3***, I will examine the representation of *Information values:* whether it is something already known (Given information) or something to be found out (New information). I will also discuss the relationship between the distribution of Given and New (distribution of meaning in Left/Right spatial domain) and scriptorial directionality.

Section ***5.4.2*** is concerned with the way in which meanings are distributed in the spatial domain of Top and Bottom. This examines how Japanese and British advertising texts make use of the Top/Bottom part of a given text, in order to realise certain meanings. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) suggest that in the Western visual semiotic, the top part of a text tends to realise abstract notions or something 'ideal' (Ideal), the bottom part of a text, by contrast, realises the specific and down-to-earth (Real). In my textual analysis, I will consider meaning distribution in the domain of Top and Bottom depending on what they realise: Top and Bottom in a visual space provide meaning potential for: the 'abstract' and the 'specific' (to be discussed in section ***5.4.2.1***); the 'potential' (or 'imaginary') and the 'real' (section ***5.4.2.2***); the 'positive' and the 'negative' (section ***5.4.2.3***).

In section ***5.4.3***, I will draw attention to the use of the visual space of the Centre in relation to Margins: how the central part of a text is used as a resource for the realisation of certain meanings, and how what is placed in the marginal space is related to the meaning realised by the centre. I will discuss two types of centring structures: 1) *Vertical centrality* (to be discussed in section ***5.4.3.1***); 2) *Circular centrality* (section ***5.4.3.2***).

Figure 5-14 shows an abstract representation of Vertical and Circular centrality. The

recognition of centrality is related to the presence of certain visual elements in a given text. There is a salient element in the vertical middle band of the text or possibly in the form of *circular* images.



Vertical centrality ***Circular centrality***

Figure 5-14 ***Abstract representation of Vertical/Circular centrality***

With respect to Vertical centrality (***5.4.3.1***), I will draw attention to the way in which a sense of centrality is created. This might happen through a combination of human participants and images of products (as in section ***5.4.3.1.1***); or through images of products (section ***5.4.3.1.2***). Based on my argument in these two sections, I will discuss the notion of *balance* which is created by the presence of Vertical centrality.

My textual analysis of Circular centrality (section ***5.4.3.2***) is based mainly on Japanese examples on the grounds that circular images are more commonly realised in Japanese advertisements than in British ones. The first section ***5.4.3.2.1*** pays particular attention to Japanese advertisements which make use of circular figures placed in the domain of *Centre.* The second section ***5.4.3.2.2*** will discuss another type of circular figure: *empty* circularity, where a visual element is absent.

Kress and van Leeuwen (Ibid:204) argue that central composition is a characteristic

feature of Asian visual semiotics, which they attribute to Confucian thinking. This would make centring a fundamental organizational principle in the visual semiotic of these cultures. My assumption about centring structures is that they play a stronger role in Japanese visual representations than in British ones. I will, therefore, be focusing on the way in which centring space (both Vertical and Circular) is used for the manifestation of meanings mainly in Japanese advertising texts.

5.4.1 Left/Right

5.4.1.1 Left/Right as temporal sequence

First of all, I will focus on the way in which the Left/Right part of textual space realises meaning. I will begin with a set of Japanese and British advertisements (Figures 5-15 and 5-16, respectively). Figure 5-15 advertises a male hairpiece, which appeared in the Japanese magazine *Spa.* The main copy reads, *"Ours is just different. You can rely on Svenson even on holiday".* There are two photographs above the lead copy, both of which show a family of three (who appear to be on holiday; there is a suitcase, on which a little girl is sitting and the man is carrying a travel bag on his shoulder). These two photographs indicate the difference in the man's hair: in the left photograph, the man is represented as having hair, while the other photograph on the right shows him bald.

Figure 5-16 is an advertisement for cosmetic surgery by *The Pountney Clinic,* which is taken from the British women's magazine *Cosmopolitan.* It shows photographs of part of the bodies of a patient who went through cosmetic surgery with this clinic. For example, the photograph on the top left side shows two states of a woman's nose; the image on the left hand side shows a woman with her nose (before surgery) and the other image shows the same woman with her operated nose (after surgery). These sets of

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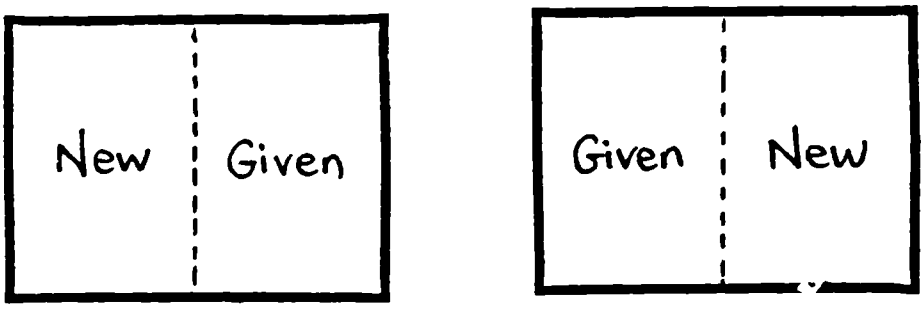
images have in common that the left side image is a depiction of a supposedly problematic situation, which can be improved, they suggest, to achieve a better state.

Figures 5-15 and 5-16 indicate that the visual image in both advertisements realises temporal process of 'before' and 'after'. In the case of Figure 5-15, there is a temporal process of 'before' using a *Svenson* hairpiece and 'after' using the product. Images in Figure 5-16 indicate 'before' cosmetic surgery and 'after' the surgery. In other words, a set of two images manifests two stages: a problematic situation and a situation where the problem has been solved.

I would like to note however that these two advertisements have a different positioning of these two stages ('before' and 'after'): the Japanese example has its problematic situation ('before' stage) on the right and the improved situation ('after' stage) on the left. The British example, by contrast, realises the former in the left and the latter in the right.

In terms of information value of Given and New, the Japanese text realises Given in the right and New in the left, while the British text manifests Given in the left and New in the right. Given in both texts suggests a *status quo*, the situation that is 'already there' or the point of departure, which leads to the New, something that is newly gained, or something that is worth paying attention to. A framework (distribution of values in visual domain) proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) can be applied to the British example, but not to the Japanese one. My assumption here is that Japanese visual representations tend to allow the realization of Given in the right and New in the left, which is different from that of British visual representations. Figure 5-17 shows an abstract representation of Given/New distribution of Japanese and British texts.



Japanese examples *British examples*

Figure 5-17

5.4.1.2 Left/Right and the degree of salience

Now I will look at another set of Japanese and British advertisements in order to see how this opposite distribution of Given and New (discussed in the previous section ***5.4.2.1***) is realised in the representation of salient and less significant elements, in the meaning making in the overall visual space. In particular, as far as the examples I am going to use in this section are concerned, I will take note of images of a given product as the most *salient elements* among others, such as verbal copy, on the grounds that the image of products tend to draw more attention from the viewer: what an advertised product looks like is one of the most significant pieces of information in the advertisements.

Figure 5-18 and Figure 5-19 both appeared in the same issue of the British women's magazine *ELLE* (UK edition). The former is an advertisement by a Japanese company (*Bionsen*) and the latter is a campaign by an American company (*Advance Research Laboratories Inc*).

There is a striking similarity between the two texts in that both of them have Left/Right composition, which consists of visual elements and script (or copy) section.

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However they position the visual and script elements differently in the text. For example, Figure 5-18 has an image of the product on the left hand side of the text, and the copy on the right. In Figure 5-19, by contrast, the visual element (the image of the product) comes on the right and the copy is placed on the left.

Given that the image of the product has a meaning of New in the sense that it is something to be found out, or focused on, as opposed to the Given as a realisation of something that draws less attention in terms of commercial interest), it follows that these two advertisements have a different spatial distribution of Given and New. The Japanese example has New on the left and the British one has New on the right. As in the case of Figures 5-15 and 5-16, this set of Japanese and British advertisements (Figures 5-18 and 5-19) manifest the distribution of Given and New in a different spatial domain (c.f. Figure 5-17). Consequently, the flow of Given and New is spatially realised right to left in the case of Japanese examples and left to right in the British examples.

5.4.1.3 Left/Right as distribution of knowledge

In this section, I would like to take up another set of Japanese and British visualisations, to see how each example realises the concepts of Given and New in visual space. Although the scope of my research is a study of printed advertisements, I am going to draw on examples of Japanese and British visual representations from television weather forecasts and deal with them in the form of abstract representations[35]. Figure 5-20 is an abstract representation of a Japanese weather forecast by NHK (the national broadcast company) and Figure 5-21 shows an abstract representation of a BBC weather forecast.

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[35] Abstract representations show only the main participants such as the weather person and the Weather map.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) point out a tendency, regarding the Given and New structure in television programmes, namely that the interviewer in the television programme is usually placed to the left of the interviewee, which, they argue, forms a Given/New information structure. The interviewer can be regarded as Given, someone who is already known to the audience and it is a point of departure for the interview (an interview programme usually starts with the interviewer asking a question for the interviewee). The interviewee, on the other hand, is New in the sense that he or she provides something 'new', something for the audience to find out, therefore the focus of attention, or "points at issue" to use Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) term.

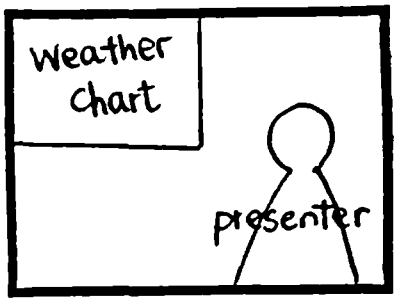

Figure 5-20 (NHK)

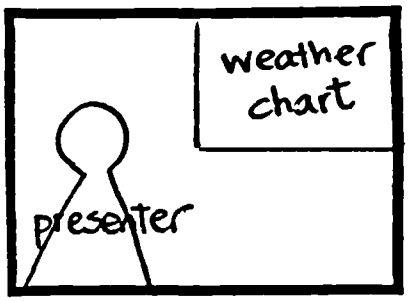

Figure 5-21 (BBC)

In Figure 5-20, there is a reporter on the right hand side and a weather chart (or map) is placed on the left hand side of the space. In terms of information values of Given and New, it can be argued that the reporter is represented as Given, in that this position realises someone who is 'already known' to the audience, while the weather chart is something to be 'found out' or 'newly discovered': New. Weather changes daily while the presenter does not.

In the British example (Figure 5-21), the reporter and the weather chart also manifest

the meaning of Given and New, respectively. In terms of the positioning of these elements, however, Figure 5-21 is different from Figure 5-20. In the former case, Given is realised in the left part of the visual space and New is in the right section: the weather person on the left and a weather map on the right.

In this way, Figure 5-20 and Figure 5-21 exemplify a different distribution of the information values of Given and New across different cultural contexts (Japanese and British) in which the texts are produced. It may be safe to say now that the different visual directionality means that the meanings of Given and New are realised differently. There is a strong connection in the Japanese texts between being in the left with New and being in the right with Given, while the opposite is the case with the British examples, where the left part of a text is used for the meaning of Given and the right part for the meaning of New.

The positioning of Given in the right and New in the left in the Japanese example (Figure 5-20) can also be considered in terms of the underlying spatial semiotic which is specific to a Japanese cultural context. That is, not only visual directionality, but also the distribution of information values of Given and New gives a strong sense of the flow of right to left as opposed to that of left to right, which is more prominent in British examples. If the former is characteristic of Japanese visual semiotic, then it follows that Figure 5-20 maintains the indigenous visual syntax which is juxtaposed with Western visual lexis (in the sense that the Japanese presenter is dressed up in a Western style clothes). In this Japanese NHK weather forecast, there is a western visual lexis in that the reporter is dressed in a western style. Yet, the represented participant who realises western visual lexis is positioned within the visual space in accordance with Japanese indigenous spatial semiotic.

5.4.1.4 Left/Right and scriptorial visual directionality

The advertising texts that I have dealt with so far have proved that there is a difference in the distribution of meanings (of Given and New) in the spatial domain of Left and Right between Japanese and British texts. Now, I will focus on the distribution of Given and New, in relation to the scriptorial directionality.

In the case of Figure 5-16 and Figure 5-19 (British examples), the flow of Given and New (from left to right) is consistent with the scriptorial directionality (of left to right). In other words, verbal caption or copy in both examples is written in English, which creates the directionality of left to right. The distribution of Given in the left and New in the right also creates the flow of left to right. In this sense, it might be possible to speculate upon the existence of an underlying spatial semiotic system, which determines meaning making across different semiotic modes. This reinforces the point made in section ***5.3.4***.

With respect to the Japanese examples (Figure 5-15 and Figure 5-18), on the other hand, we get a different picture from the British examples. These examples, the flow of Given and New (from right to left) do not agree with the scriptorial directionality (of left to right). In the case of Figure 5-15, the Japanese verbal copy makes use of the horizontal writing method, which is written in the same manner as in English, from left to right. Figure 5-18, the copy of which is written in English, has the same scriptorial directionality (of left to right).

It has to be noted here that in Figure 5-15 and Figure 5-18, in contrast to their scriptorial directionality of left to right, the distribution of information values of Given and New create the opposite flow of right to left. Both Figures 5-15 and 5-18 are Japanese advertisements which have adopted a scriptorial directionality of left to right,

which was introduced to Japan and was modified as a horizontal way of writing, but actually maintains (possibly) the inherently Japanese pictorial directionality of right to left within the same visual space. This juxtaposition of scriptorial and pictorial directionality in these Japanese examples might suggest a complex mechanism, by which the Japanese underlying spatial semiotic system governs the realisation of meaning through different (more than one) semiotic modes. The discussion of Figures 5-15 and 5-18 therefore suggests that pictorial directionality may be more deeply rooted in an underlying Japanese spatial semiotic than scriptorial directionality on the grounds that, as far as my examples are concerned, the former retains its cultural specificness more persistently than the latter.

5.4.2 Top/Bottom

This section will focus on the distinction of Top and Bottom in visual space: what kind of meaning potential the top part and bottom part are endowed with. I will begin with a text that exemplifies Kress and van Leeuwen's proposition about Top and Bottom as Ideal and Real: Ideal as something 'abstract' and 'generalised' and Real as something 'specific' (section ***5.4.3.1***). Section ***5.4.3.2*** considers this spatial entity of Ideal and Real in terms of a distinction between some imaginary (or idealised) potential and something 'real' or 'down to earth'. Spatial orientation of Top and Bottom can also be viewed in relation to the spatial metaphor of *up* and *down*. *Up* as a spatial metaphor of something 'positive' and *down* as something 'negative'. In relation to this spatial metaphor of *up* and *down*, I will take up an example that conveys a sense of 'positive' and 'negative' in the visual space of Top and Bottom, respectively, in section ***5.4.3.3***.

5.4.2.1 Top/Bottom as Abstract/Specific

I will now refer back to a previous example (Figure 5-9). This is the opening campaign for the Japanese department store *Keikyu.* The lower part of this text realises the meaning of Real, in that there is detailed information about the store (such as floor information, access to public transport, the address of the store and its telephone number). The upper part of the text, which consists of visual images and copy, manifests the meaning of Ideal, in the sense that it provides information of a more abstract kind, such as the company's suggestion for a happy life style. The lead copy reads, *"Shiawase ga kazoku to issyoni hashiridasu."* ('Happiness is coming running towards your family'), which is followed by sub-copy that explains the business policy of the department store and its relevance to the welfare of an individual family.

Also in the case of Figure 5-22 (a British advertisement for *Twining's Tea*), the lower part of the text includes more detailed and specific types of information (such as the image of products and a telephone number to be contacted for a free sample) than in the upper part of the text, where there is an image of a blackberry. In other words, in Figure 5-22, the concrete and detailed information is distributed in the bottom section of the text.

5.4.2.2 Top/Bottom as Potential/Reality

Figure 5-23 is the back of *Kellogg's* cereal packet (*Fruit' n' Fibre*). There is a purple strip on which the copy reads, *"Kellogg's - we don't make cereals for anybody else"*, which is followed by more copy with a relatively large font, *"Follow these simple instructions for a great tasting breakfast"*. Below this is a set of six images of 'proposed' ingredients for breakfast cereal (bananas, apples, grapes and nuts). There are

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verbal captions to go along with these images. Towards the lower part of the text, there is another purple strip on which the copy is printed, *"or simply open this box and Enjoy"*.

Images of these ingredients placed in the upper section of the text are represented in an 'idealised' way. For example, a beautifully yellow banana has been cut very neatly, and green apples look as though they were freshly washed and sliced nicely. This is a dimension, where an ideal or desirable state of things are realised; it is best to get hold of fresh ingredients like the ones in the images to make an *ideally* perfect cereal. This is a suggestion for the ideal outcome, or something that *could be done*. In this respect, it may be said that this upper section (domain of Ideal) suggests an imaginary potential.

The Ideal domain here suggests that getting hold of the ideal ingredients leads to the ideal cereal, but it is the lower part of the text that realises a more down-to-earth solution to cereal making. The message can be 'instead of taking great trouble to go through the procedure shown in the Ideal domain (collecting and processing the right kind of ingredients), *Kellogg's* can provide a much easier and more practical solution, which can be realised only through the purchase of Kellogg's cereal.

5.4.2.3 Top/Bottom as Positive/Negative

The upper/bottom part of visual space can be a spatial metaphor of *up* as something good and positive, and *down* as something bad and negative (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). As Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) describe, in the world of Christianity, the image of Heaven has been always placed in the upper part of the visual space, and the image of hell in the bottom. As is seen in Figure 5-24 (taken from Kress and van Leeuwen 1996: 196), Heaven, where Adam and Eve are located, is depicted in the upper part of the text and Death is represented at the bottom.

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Figure 5-25 exemplifies this type of spatial metaphor: *up* as something 'positive' and *down* as something 'problematic'. This is a poster by London Transport, which advertises night bus services from central London to the suburbs. There is a red arrow, with the background of a night view of London, running from the bottom part of the text to the top part, which is accompanied by a verbal caption, *"Piccadilly circus - you are here"*, which leads to *"nice warm duvet"*. London Transport's night bus services are aimed at those who live in the suburbs of London, who need easy access to a home-bound journey, after spending time in central London. The *nice warm duvet* in the domain of Ideal is contrasted with the central London at night after the underground has closed: a situation in which it is difficult to get public transport. In this way, it is the upper section of the text that realises the meaning of Ideal: something 'positive' and 'desirable' and the meaning of Real: something 'less positive' and 'problematic' is in the bottom part of the text.

5.4.3 Centre/Margins

This section will deal with two types of realisation of centrality: Vertical and Circular. In section ***5.4.3.1***, I will draw attention to what is represented in the vertical central band of visual space: in the first sub-section ***5.4.3.1.1***, I will discuss examples in which human participants together with images of the products form Vertical centrality; in the second sub-section ***5.4.3.1.2***, I will focus on Vertical centrality realised by images of the products; in the third sub-section ***5.4.3.1.3***, I will discuss the issue of balance created by this type of centrality: *symmetricality* and *asymmetricality* in relation to the manifestation of cultural values.

In section ***5.4.3.2***, I will focus on what is realised in the visual domain of Centre,

which is in the middle of a visual space. All the examples that I am going to use have a circular element in the Centre; I divide them into two categories, Circular centrality realised by the existence of visual participants (section ***5.4.3.2.1***) and those realised by the absence of visual elements: *empty* centrality (section ***5.4.3.2.2***).

5.4.3.1 Vertical centrality

5.4.3.1.1 Human participants and images of products

Figure 5-26 and Figure 5-27 are both Japanese advertisements, which are taken from the Japanese women's magazines *More* and *With.* Figure 5-26 is an advertisement for Chinese-style tea (*Oolong tea*) and Figure 5-27 is for a Japanese health drink called *Yakult.* The central verticality in Figure 5-27 is created by the presence of two human represented participants and an image of products placed below them, these participants form salience in this text. In the case of Figure 5-27, the images of two human participants and an image of *Yakult* and vertically written copy (which is placed above these images) are positioned in the vertical centrality which gives rise to salience.

In both cases, the central band of the text realises images of human participants with an image of the product. It may be said, with respect to Figure 5-27, that human participants are there to introduce a given product. For they have an enlarged bottle of *Yakult* between them, which places the product in the very middle of the text. Also in Figure 5-26, the image of the product is placed vertically below the human represented participants, which locates the product in the middle band of the text (vertically).

5.4.3.1.2 Images of products

Some advertisements make use of the central space for the realisation of product-image

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(Figure 5-28 and Figure 5-29). Figure 5-28 is an advertisement for a watch by the Japanese company *Seiko.* There is an image of the *Seiko Kinetic Watch* in a hand and these images form the most salient vertical centrality in this text. The strap of the watch creates a vertical line, together with the image of the hand.

Figure 5-29 is an advertisement for Scotch Whisky, which is imported by a Japanese trading company. There is an image of the product (a bottle of Scotch Whisky), together with a whisky glass in the middle part of the text, which creates a sense of vertical centrality, taking up the vertical band of the textual space.

As discussions of the examples (From Figure 5-26 to Figure 5-29) suggest, it can be argued that the central part of the text provides a resource for the purpose of i) realising human participants with images of products; ii) realising images of products. Besides, this kind of placement of these represented participants creates a sense of 'verticality', in that they form a salient point in a central band of the textual space, which cuts across the text vertically.

5.4.3.1.3 Balance created by Vertical centrality

The presence of *salience*, which is manifested in the central part of these texts (Figure 5-26 to Figure 5-29), gives rise to the issue of balance in the text. In other words, vertical centrality provides a text with a sense of symmetrical balance. For example, the human figures and the image of the product in Figure 5-26 divide the textual space in a symmetrical manner, that is, the salient point sustains a symmetrical balance of the text. A question arises here: does vertical centrality and *symmetricality* created by the vertical centrality imply something specific about the Japanese visual semiotic?

Regarding this issue of symmetricality in relation to Japanese culture, Komatsu and

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Takanashi (1986) argue that the Japanese aesthetic tradition has focused more on asymmetrical features rather than balanced symmetrical ones. They also propose that there is a strong association between the Western aesthetic tradition with symmetricality and the Japanese aesthetic tradition with *asymmetricalty*, which they attempt to prove by referring to broader cultural activities of production, such as gardening and architecture. For example, according to them, Japanese gardens tend to place objects (such as stones and trees) in the manner that gives a sense of asymmetricalty, compared to the Western equivalents (French-style gardens in particular).

Their perspective suggests the possibility of further study in this field of 'cultural implications in visual semiotic'. The way in which asymmetry is constructed is worth noting here: a sense of asymmetry can be constructed around the Left/Right division; or around the Centre/Margins and asymmetry must assume a prior taken for granted symmetry, against which it works, for there to be an aesthetic effect. I take the view that as far as my advertising data (Japanese advertisements: Figures 5-26 to 5-29)) is concerned, a prominent tendency is observed that the formal structure of Vertical centrality in these texts manifests a sense of symmetricality, which is derived from the Left/Right division.

There is another issue regarding verticality as opposed to *horizontality*, that is, the possible relationship between verticality and Japanese visual semiotic. It has to be pointed out that advertising texts with vertical centrality appear to be more prominent in Japanese advertisements than in British ones. Manley (1993) suggests that this is in accordance with this cultural specificness of verticality in Japanese texts: he proposes, based on findings in his comparative study of Japanese and British garden layouts, that there has been a notable emphasis on vertical structure in Japanese gardens, in

comparison to British gardens, where there is a more prominent sense of horizontality.

Again, like the view of Komatsu and Takanashi (Idem), Manley's proposition is concerned with three dimensional material objects, which are different from the printed advertising texts I am dealing with in my research. However, I also think his point is worth following up, in that any form of realisation of visual semiosis (whether it is three-dimensional gardens and architecture or two dimensional visual images in printed advertisements) can be determined by the underlying spatial semiotic of a given culture.

5.4.3.2 Circular centrality

5.4.3.2.1 Circular images in the domain of Centre

Japanese advertisements, Figure 5-30 and Figure 5-31, exemplify a type of centrality created by circular images; namely, Circular centrality. Both of them are taken from a Japanese newspaper, the *Yomiuri Shimbun.* Figure 5-30 advertises fruit dessert as a suggestion for a summer gift, by a company called *Hagoromo Food.* There is a circular image in the middle of the text, which consists of double 'layers' of circles: an inner circle and an outer circle. The inner circle shows a photographic image of the product (a set of fruit dessert in a gift box), beside of which is an indication of the price. In the outer circle, there are photographic images of 'serving suggestions' (using *Hagoromo Fruit dessert*), together with cartoon images of a mother and her little daughter, who are making fruit dessert.

What is realised in the inner circle and what is represented in the outer circle is connected in the sense that by using the product ('the starting point'), it is possible to make a variety of desserts. The product (in the inner core) is what is in common, or something that the consumer shares, from which individual variations or applications can

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be derived. In this sense, the inner-most central space is used for the manifestation of a significant point, or *nucleus* of information. It is significant because it shows the image of a product (to be recognised by the prospective consumer) and because it carries other significant information: the price of the product. It might also be put that information takes on a sense of importance when it is positioned in the middle part of the text. Values of represented participants are greatly determined by their positioning within a given visual space.

Figure 5-31 is another Japanese example, which advertises money vouchers for JR (*Japan Railways*). There is a circular image in the middle of the text (the domain of Centre), which forms salience. This circular figure includes a cartoon-like image of a smiling face and an image of the voucher. The cartoon image is represented to be holding the voucher in its 'mouth', which takes the form of a ribbon for gift wrapping. As in the case of the previous example (Figure 5-30), the central space of the text is used to realise the image of the advertised product: The JR money voucher in Figure 5-31. Now I would like to consider the following points: the meaning (or significance) of this circular element being used, the possible motivation behind the choice of circular shape; the significance of its placement in the domain of Centre; and how the Centre domain is used as a resource for meaning making.

Firstly, what is signified by the choice of circular shape in its salient point might be considered in relation to the fact that this is a seasonal advertisement[36], which promotes JR money vouchers as a gift in celebration of the new year. In Japan, it is April that marks the beginning of the new school and academic year, and the fiscal year for

[36] A type of advertisement that focuses on a particular type of product at a particular time of the year. (e.g. A campaign for Christmas goods in December)

business. Schools and universities start in April and newly recruited graduates start their jobs in April.) Japan Railway's promotion is therefore targeted at this 'gift season' in Japan. It may be said that the circular image in this text manifests a sense of good-luck, positiveness and freshness for the new season. Or, circularity can be regarded as one of the manifestations of the cultural values of Japan, where harmony among people is highly valued (the circle is related to this sense of harmony). This is indicated in the Japanese word *"marui"* (an adjective, meaning 'round') that can be used to imply a positive and good-natured personality: if it is said in Japanese that someone's personality is *round,* it means that he or she is positive, warm-hearted, and a respectful character, someone who fits well into Japanese society, which values harmony and cooperation.

Secondly, I would like to consider the significance of the positioning of this circular element in the middle of the textual space. I will focus on the way in which the domain of Centre allows the represented participant (the circular image) to manifest certain meanings. Being placed in the centre of the text, the circular image manifests a concept that members of Japanese society have in common, in other words, a 'shared knowledge' among Japanese people that is to do with seasonal change: Spring as the season of a new starting point. In other words, a culturally shared concept is realised, using the centre part of the text, in the form of the circular image. It may be safe to say therefore that the domain of Centre in Figure 5-31 is used as a resource for realising a culturally shared concept.

Finally, I would like to focus on the relationship between the central figure and other represented participants placed in the marginal space. There are images of the petals of cherry flowers surrounding the central circular figure. Being placed in the background to the circular figure (the domain of Margins) these images of cherry flowers reinforce

a Japanese concept of 'Spring as the beginning of a new season'. In other words, they function as a *visual* seasonal marker in the context of Japanese culture.

5.4.3.2.2 Empty centrality

In the examples that I have looked at so far (Figure 5-30 and Figure 5-31) the core information (such as the images of products) of advertisements, and at the same time visual elements placed in the domain of Centre form the most salient part of the text. I now turn to another example (Figure 5-32), which has a different arrangement from Figure 5-30 and Figure 5-31, in that the most salient point in the former text is *not* placed in the domain of Centre, but in the marginal space.

Figure 5-32 is a two-page spread advertisement, taken from a British magazine *The Economist*, by a Japanese company *NEC* (*Nippon Electronic Company*). This is a campaign for *NEC*'s multimedia services. There is an image of a computer mouse (on which the company logo *NEC* appears) in the centre part of the text and this can be considered the *Centre* because of its placement. There are three sets of images along the 'line' that comes out of the mouse: which are labelled as *"Tele-Entertainment"; "Tele-working"; "Electronic Commerce"*, from left to right. These images take a position of Margins, in relation to the Centre in that they are 'surrounding elements' of the Centre. Unlike Figure 5-30 and Figure 5-31, it is these marginal elements that form salience. These images are visually more salient than the 'empty centre space'. The question arises here: how does this empty space function as the Centre in this advertisement?

Barthes (1970) takes notice of 'empty heart of Tokyo' in his semiotic analysis of Japanese objects; he argues that there is an empty centre space in Tokyo, where there is "a power which exerts itself". According to Barthes' interpretation, the empty space of

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Tokyo functions as a source from which dynamics emanate. If Barthes's point is applied to the Centre/Margins relationship in Figure 5-32, this advertisement might be read that the computer mouse (placed in the 'empty' centre) represents an omniscient power that allows various possibilities in the use of multimedia (as is shown as the Margins: *"Tele-Entertainment"; "Tele-Working"; "Electronic Commerce"*). In this respect, the Centre in this text is not empty in the sense that it is free from any function, on the contrary, it holds potentiality that creates "a force sent out like an arrow from a centre of energy" (Arnheim 1988:4). It can be argued, as a close implication of Barthes' assumption, that the 'seemingly' empty centre in Figure 5-32 functions as "the centre of energy".

The fact that an 'empty' space (in the sense that it does not contain any *visible* represented participants) has a concentration of 'energy' or 'dynamics', from which other marginal elements derive, cast a light on the potentiality of the domain of Centre in Japanese visual representations. It has to be noted that a further study is required to explore the cultural significance (or implications) the central space of a given text represents. Consequently, this point leads to the consideration of underlying Japanese spatial semiotic in relation to Japanese ontology.

5.4.3.2.3 Balance created by Circular centrality

As is discussed in section ***5.4.4.1.3***, the Left/Right division in a given space can potentially give rise to a sense of symmetry or asymmetry, the latter being dependent on the former, depending on the placement of visual elements. Japanese advertising texts (Figures 5-30 - 5-32) in the present exemplify the use of the Centre/Margins composition around which a sense of balance (symmetry or asymmetry) is created.

For example, circular images in Figures 5-30 and 5-31 realise a symmetricality in that

they are placed in the right side of the middle of the visual space, while Figure 5-32 shows the use of an asymmetricalty because of the slight off-centre positioning of the circular element. Although I have categorised these texts under the label of Circular centrality, the system of balance, depending on the degree of symmetricality and asymmetricalty can determine the degree of centrality. Given that, it follows that the symmetricality in Figures 5-30 and 5-31 attributes a higher degree of centrality than the asymmetricalty in Figure 5-32.

5.4.4 Summary

This section has focused on the way in which a visual space is used as meaning potential, which is categorised as the Textual metafunction of visual semiosis. Among the types of textual compositions which I have dealt with: Left/Right; Top/Bottom; Centre/Margins, it is the use of the Left/Right visual domain which suggests cultural specificness and difference between Japanese and British examples. The left and right part of texts can be responsible for a manifestation of a temporal sequence and this is realised differently between Japanese and British data: the former has its point of departure on the right and the latter has it on the left. The different distribution of *Information* value therefore creates dynamics across a visual space of each type of examples. (This may be considered in relation to the notion of *visual directionality* discussed in section **5.3**.)

Compared to the meaning distribution in Left and Right, in Top and Bottom, there is a lower degree of cultural specificness to be pointed out between Japanese and British examples, and this may suggest the presence of a common ontology or spatial orientation across Japanese and British cultures: Japanese and British visual semiotics allow

similarity in the manifestation of the meaning distribution of Top and Bottom. As far as the examples I have discussed are concerned, the Top part of texts has a meaning potential for something 'abstract', 'potential' and 'positive', whereas the Bottom part tends to be used to represent visual participants which are 'specific', 'real' and 'less positive'.

I have discussed centring structures, with exclusive reference to Japanese examples, based on my assumption that they are more prominent in Japanese advertising texts than in British advertisements. I would argue that the presence of a sense of balance and that of *centripetal force* by those centring structures are syntactical realisations of Japanese cultural value systems. What a sense of balance implies about Japanese culture can be the significance it attaches to 'harmony', 'cooperation' and 'balanced proportion'. The prominent use of centring structures, Circular centrality in particular, suggests that Japan is a society where a sense of collective and group consciousness is highly regarded. Figure 5-33 summarises what has been discussed in this section **5.4**.

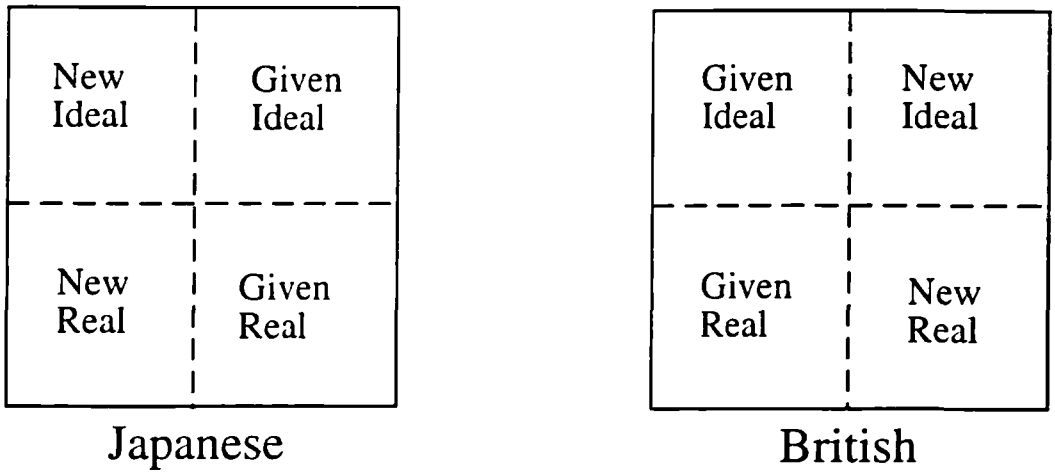

Figure 5-33 Use of Space in Japanese and British visual space
(after Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:208)

5.5 CONCLUSION

The descriptive categories I have dealt with in this chapter run across two semiotic functions: the Ideational and the Textual. I have attempted to show that the way in which both functions work exhibit important differences between Japanese and British visual semiotics.

With respect to the Ideational metafunction, discussed in section **5.3**, I focused exclusively on the issue of visual directionality: the way in which represented participants embody *processes*. What my textual analysis has demonstrated can be summarised in the following points,

1) Visual directionality in Japanese advertisements is characterised by a prominent use of the directionality of right to left. Represented participants in British advertise -ments, by contrast, tend to create the visual directionality of left to right.

2) The choice of visual directionality is related to scriptorial directionality. For example, in British advertisements, the writing direction of English (left to right, written horizontally) accords with the visual directionality of left right. In the case of Japanese, the traditional writing method, which is written vertically, from top to bottom, and from right to left as a sequence of columns the directionality, agrees with the visual directionality of right to left.

My examples are restricted to Japanese and British advertising texts and these findings through this limited range of examples show the necessity of further research in order to explore each visual semiotic as a whole, and to show that the realisation of written language and visual images are determined by an underlying spatial semiotic, which exists separately: Japanese visual semiotics and British visual semiotics.

With respect to the use of visual space (discussed in section **5.4**), it is demonstrated that each domain of visual space (Left/Right; Top/Bottom; Centre/Margins) realises different meanings. A visual space in different cultures has different meaning potential, which is determined by an underlying spatial semiosis of a given culture. The difference

in meaning potential within a visual space across cultures surfaces and becomes particularly clear when advertising messages are similar. Given visual elements which are categorised as lexically similar, the visual semiotic of one culture may position or distribute them in a different visual domain from that of others: this is a level at which visual syntax plays a significant role as cultural representation.

The meaning distribution in the Centre/Margins is worth particular mention on the grounds that centrality is the most typical formal manifestation of Japanese cultural value systems: the sense of balance (created by the presence of symmetricality) can be interpreted as a visual realisation of an emphasis on 'harmony' and 'collectiveness', by which members of Japanese society are 'unified'.

From what has been discussed, I would like to draw attention to a deeper relationship between the Ideational and Textual metafunction of visual semiosis. In the study of visual semiotics by Kress and van Leeuwen (1966), these two functions are considered as inter-related but are separately dealt with. My textual analysis suggests that these two functions are related to a more general (deeper) system of semiosis: an underlying spatial semiosis. This is most prominently observed shown in the system of visual directionality and that of the distribution of the Information values of Given and New. The visual directionality of left to right has a tendency to be combined with the textual realisation of left as Given and right as New, and the visual directionality of right to left tends to go with that of right as Given and left as New. The question of which function is primarily determined over the other remains to be answered, but the findings of this chapter suggest the possibility an underlying spatial semiotic, which is variable from one culture to another.

Chapter VI VISUAL SYNTAX 2: Social Interactions

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I looked at how the Ideational and Textual metafunctions contribute to meaning making in Japanese and British advertisements. I focused particularly on the way in which visual directionality works, as a formal realisation of the Ideational metafunction. With respect to the Textual metafunction, I examined the use of visual space; how meanings are made in the distribution of elements across visual space and how far their distribution is culturally specific.

This chapter will draw attention to the third type of semiotic metafunction: the Interpersonal. In particular, I will focus on the relationship between represented participants in advertising texts and the viewer, in other words, the way in which advertising texts manifest *interactive meanings* between represented participants and the viewer. I am going to discuss Interpersonal meaning making with reference to *interactive markers: Contact*; *Social Distance*; *Attitude*, *Colours* and *Contextualisation.*

Section **6.2** demonstrates the way in which interactive meanings are manifested through formal realisations by two types of visual participants: human and non-human. One of the issues to be considered here is how human represented participants and non-human represented participants interact differently and similarly with the viewer. Thus, I will be looking at Japanese advertising texts to see not only how human represented participants (section ***6.2.1.1***) but also non-human represented participants (section ***6.2.1.2***) manifest the Interpersonal metafunction.

In order to make my points clearer about interactive meaning making in Japanese

advertising texts, which are discussed in **6.2**, I will attempt a comparative analysis of Japanese and British advertisements in section **6.3**. In this section, I will draw attention to the way in which Japanese and British examples use formal features to manifest interactive meanings between represented participants and the viewer. With reference to differences and similarities in interactive meaning making between Japanese and British advertisements, I will also consider what they suggest about the cultures of Japan and Britain, such as cultural specificness in value systems.

6.2 INTERPERSONAL MEANING MAKING IN JAPANESE ADVERTISEMENTS

In section ***6.2.1.1***, I will deal with two sets of examples. I will focus solely on how human represented participants in these examples interact with the viewer. One of the examples I use is a set of three advertisements for beverages. I have chosen them as data on the grounds that the similarity in their use of human participants makes a comparison of interactive meanings more explicit. I also use an advertisement for a wedding services agency, with the aim of finding out how interactive markers are used to construct socially conventionalised occasions.

Section ***6.2.1.2*** will draw attention to the role of non-human represented participants in Interpersonal meaning making. A particular issue to be discussed here is how non-human participants can manifest the system of *Contact*, which will be dealt with in the first section ***6.2.1.2.1.*** The second section ***6.2.1.2.2*** is concerned with the system of *Attitude*. I will explore how this system of social interaction is made use of for the purpose of commodity representation, by looking at two Japanese car advertisements.

Finally, in section ***6.2.1.3***, I will consider the *Use of colour* and *Contextualisation* as a device of Interpersonal meaning making, which incorporates both human and non-human represented participants. I will revisit previously discussed examples from the perspective of how the use of colours and contexts create interactive meanings between what is represented in the text and the viewer.

6.2.1 Textual analysis

6.2.1.1 Interpersonal meaning making through human participants

6.2.1.1.1 The system of *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude* in represented participants in three beverage advertisements

My first set of examples are Japanese advertisements for *Laceby Hall Tea, Suntory Oolong Tea* and *Yakult* (Figures 4-1, 5-26 and 5-27, respectively). *Laceby Hall Tea* is a British-style tea, the *Suntory Oolong Tea* is a Chinese-style tea, and *Yakult* is a Japanese health drink. All these examples use human represented participants placed in the centre of the page. In Figure 4-1, there are three human participants (a man and two women), and in Figures 5-26 and 5-27, there are two human participants (a man and a woman). The other example (Figure 6-1) in this section is a Japanese advertisement for wedding services. It shows an image of a wedding ceremony where there are three human represented participants in the text. Using these examples, I will discuss the interactive systems of *Contact*, *Social Distance* and *Attitude.*

The system of Contact

I will begin my textual analysis with the interactive meaning of *Contact.* In all three texts, the human represented participants realise *Demand Contact* in that they are

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represented as having eye contact with the viewer. In the *Laceby Hall Tea* advertisement (Figure 4-1), all three figures have *Demand Contact*. With the same interactive meaning (*Demand Contact*), the man has a different semantic realisation, as he is represented as frowning at the viewer, while the two women have a slight smile on their faces. Thus, all the represented participants have direct contact with the viewer but with different lexis ('frowning' as against 'smiling').

The man's gaze has the formal structure of *Demand Contact*, which is accompanied by a lexically realised modality feature, 'frowning', while the *Demand Contact* of the female participants is accompanied by 'smiling'. *Demand Contact* + 'frowning' and *Demand Contact* + 'smiling' give rise to different interactive meanings: they can be categorised as a negative and a positive interaction, respectively. In other words, they are represented as interactive in the same syntactical way, but different in the modal or affect relation which is realised by lexis.

In the case of the *Suntory Oolong Tea* advertisement (Figure 5-26), like Figure 4-1, the gaze is categorised as *Demand* in that the two represented participants have eye contact with the viewer. Although both of the two examples (Figures 4-1 and 5-26) have *Demand Contact*, the type of lexis that accompanies the formal feature is different. The human represented participants in Figure 5-26 are depicted as having less explicit facial expressions than participants in Figure 4-1: no man or a woman in Figure 5-26 has a 'smiling' or 'frowning' expression. In other words, the gaze of the represented participants in Figure 4-1 is more clearly lexicalised, *viz* 'the smile of the maids' and 'the frown of the butler', than that of the couple in Figure 5-26. This 'implicitness' of the facial expression of the human participants in Figure 5-26 (that functions as lexis), together with the formal feature of *Demand* constructs a different kind of interactive

meaning from Figure 4-1.

With respect to the *Yakult* advertisement (Figure 5-27), as in the *Suntory Oolong Tea* example, there are two human represented participants (a man and a woman), placed in the centre. The type of *Contact* is *Demand* in that both participants are depicted as though they were looking at the viewer. The type of their gaze is different from that of Figure 5-26 and is similar to that of the female participants in Figure 4-1, as both are smiling at the viewer.

The human represented participants in Figures 4-1, 5-26 and 5-27 are all engaged in the *Demand Contact*. However, because of the difference in the type of lexical modality that accompanies the formal structure, the interacted meaning between the represented participants and the viewer is different between Figures 4-1, 5-27 and Figure 5-26. There is a sense of 'staticness' and 'serenity' in the *Demand Contact* of Figure 5-26, compared to Figures 4-1 and 5-27, and this derives from the fact that the type of lexis that accompanies *Demand* in Figure 5-26 is of a less 'explicit' type than that in Figures 4-1 and 5-27'.

The discussion of these three examples (Figures 4-1, 5-26 and 5-27) shows that the system of *Contact* (which is syntactically realised as either *Demand* or *Offer*) can be combined with various lexical entities, such as 'smiling', 'frowning' and 'expressionless'. Different combinations of these two aspects result in different types of interactive meanings.

The system of Social Distance

Next, I will draw attention to the interactive meaning of *Social Distance,* which is coded formally by the degree of spatial distance at which participants are represented to the

viewer. The represented participants in all three examples are portrayed full length ('long shot'), which realises *Impersonal Social Distance.* As with the system of *Contact*, there is a need to separate out the type of distance represented (which is a formal feature) and the lexis that accompanies it. In other words, a similar realisation of *Social Distance* across different advertisements does not necessarily lead to the realisation of the same interactive meaning.

For example, the formally realised *Impersonal Social Distance* in Figure 4-1 can be combined with the lexis of 'Britain as a geographically and culturally remote country from Japan', which gives rise to a reading of this advertisement as a visual representation of distance between the two countries or cultures.

In the case of Figure 5-26, *Impersonal Social Distance* is combined with a different lexis which is concerned with 'Chineseness' in relation to 'Japaneseness'. As in Figure 4-1, there is a sense of 'remoteness' and 'distance' between Japan and China (or 'Japaneseness' and 'Chineseness') constructed through this particular combination of the formal structure (*Impersonal Social Distance*) and the meaning that lexis conveys.

Another type of lexical meaning is combined with *Impersonal Social Distance* in Figure 5-27 and this different combination realises a different interactive meaning. The choice of *Demand Contact* together with a lexical modality of 'smiling' allows both the man and the woman (who are a celebrity couple) to be represented as highly interactive and involving of the viewer. However, they are positioned in relation to the viewer with *Impersonal Social Distance.* These represented participants are depicted to be inviting the viewer to enter 'their world' from the perspective of what the system of *Contact* suggests, but they are not 'closely' positioned to the viewer by the system of *Social Distance.*

Unlike Figure 4-1 with the unknown Western models and Figure 5-26 with the unknown Chinese non-celebrity models, in Figure 5-27 the couple are overtly represented as a wife and a husband, and are, to those with knowledge of Japanese culture, known to be a celebrity couple, recently married. In this respect, the *Impersonal Social Distance* in the case of Figure 5-27 suggests a distance between the 'world of celebrity' and that of the 'ordinary', 'non-celebrity' world.

The system of Attitude

The third component discussed here is that of *Attitude.* The choice of the horizontal angle determines the degree of *involvement* of represented participants in relation to the viewer. The human represented participants in all three texts are depicted from a *Frontal angle*: they are all depicted as facing directly towards the viewer, which creates a sense of direct involvement. It is the vertical angle, which is a formal determiner of the power relationship between represented participants and the viewer, that differentiates how participants are represented in these three examples.

In the *Laceby Hall Tea* advertisement, a sense of the photographed represented participants slightly looking down on the viewer is created by the manner in which the photograph is shot, from a low angle. This is emphasised, as I have mentioned, by the butler's frown: the 'looking down on' angle is most explicitly represented by his gaze. The represented participants in the *Suntory Oolong Tea* advertisement (Figure 5-26) create an *Equal power Attitude,* because their gaze places the viewer at an equal eye level with the represented participants. In the *Yakult* advertisement, the human represented participants are engaged with a slightly low angle, in relation to the viewer's position. This realises the interactive meaning of *Representation power,* that is, this formal feature

makes the represented participants appear as though they were looking down on the viewer.

The choice of *Representation power* which is realised by the represented participants in Figure 4-1 could be read as an implication of a power relation between Japan and Britain, where the latter are represented as 'looking down on' the former, together with a lexical modalisation of 'Japan as a country (or culture) that is inferior to Britain (or British culture)'. This exemplifies the case where the formal realisation of the system of *Attitude* is combined with lexis in order to manifest a particular interactive meaning.

6.2.1.1.2 The system of *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude* in a campaign for wedding services

In my next example I will discuss all of the three features in an advertisement for wedding services at a Japanese hotel, called *Happoen*, whose name is composed of Chinese characters meaning, 'eight fragrant gardens', which appears on the bottom left of the text. (Figure 6-1). The source of this text is the Japanese women's magazine *More.*

There are three human represented participants in the text: a man and two women who are standing next to each other in a Japanese style garden. One of the women is in a wedding dress and the man standing next to her is represented as the Bride's father, dressed in a formal black suit. The other woman is wearing a traditional Japanese *kimono,* and can be assumed to be the Bride's sister.

With respect to Interpersonal meaning making via interactive markers, these three human participants are represented with *Offer Contact,* in that none of them is depicted as having eye contact with the viewer. These represented participants are 'there to be looked at', rather than to be 'interactive' with the viewer. Secondly, in terms of *Social*

Distance they are photographed with an extremely long shot, which realises *Impersonal Social Distance,* creating the sense of a relatively large 'distance' between them and the viewer. In terms of the meaning of *Attitude,* the human participants are represented from an oblique angle, which produces a sense of detachment as against a sense of involvement which would be produced by a frontal angle. The manner in which they are photographed; the vertical angle, also creates a low angle in relation to the viewer: *Representation power.* The low angle places the viewer in a position where they 'look up to' the represented participants.

What *Offer Contact* suggests is that these human participants are there to provide the viewer with visual information of an *objective* kind[37]: the ongoing event (a wedding) does not involve the viewer but is *observed* by the viewer. This is a visualised suggestion by *Happoen* of an 'ideal wedding', which can be realised by their service. The possible message is therefore, 'We [*Happoen*] can offer you [the viewer, including prospective customers] an excellent service in an excellent venue'.

It has to be noted, however, that a Japanese reader would know that a wedding at *Happoen* has to be something exclusive. It is not for *everyone,* but exclusively for those who can afford to choose *Happen* as a wedding venue. My argument is that this sense of 'exclusiveness' is coded by the choice of *Impersonal Social Distance* in that these human represented participants (who embody the ideal wedding) are represented at a distance from the viewer: the wedding being something that is 'remote' from the viewer, therefore, 'exclusive'. Interactive meanings manifested by *Representation power* may

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[37] Both *Demand* and *Offer* type of *Contact* provide the viewer with visual information but in a different manner. The former create *subjective* type of information in the sense the viewer actually participates an ongoing action or event. The latter creates *objective* type of information in that the viewer plays a role as an observer.

also be considered in relation to this exclusiveness of service. It suggests that the human represented participant is someone we [the viewer] can 'look up to', and someone in the 'desirable' situation in which they can afford a luxurious wedding ceremony. Thus, the choice of *Representation power* manifests the exclusiveness of the service *Happoen* can offer.

Interactive meanings realised by formal representations of *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude* not only manifest the commercial strategies of this Japanese company, but also suggest underlying Japanese cultural implications concerning weddings and marriage in general. For example, the absence of *Demand Contact,* a large 'distance' kept between the human participants and the viewer (realised by *Impersonal Social Distance*) and *Detachment Attitude* may suggest the significance of the wedding as something 'remote' and 'distanced' from ordinary everyday life in Japanese society. In other words, a wedding ceremony has significance as a solemn 'formal' and 'social' 'ritual' rather than a 'personal' or 'individual' everyday life occasion.

There is another point to be made regarding the way in which one aspect of contemporary Japanese culture is represented in the human participants: cultural hybridity. There is a mixture of Western and Japanese lexis in the sense that the bride is dressed in a Western style wedding dress, and her father is also in a Western style formal suit, while the other woman is in a traditional Japanese *kimono.*

6.2.1.2 Interpersonal meaning making through non-human participants

So far, I have dealt with human represented participants in relation to Interpersonal meaning making. I have also discussed what the choice of each interactive marker suggests in terms of the socio-cultural value systems of Japan. In this section, I will draw

attention to the way in which non-human represented participants realise Interpersonal meanings.

The first issue to be focused on (section ***6.2.1.2.1***) is how non-human represented participants realise the interactive meaning of *Contact*. *Contact* is most typically achieved by the presence of eye contact in human represented participants. I will discuss how non-human represented participants realise the system of *Contact* differently from human represented participants, with reference to three different examples.

The second section ***6.2.1.2.2*** will draw attention to the system of *Attitude* in non-human represented participants. I will take up two different car advertisements and see how a vertical and horizontal angle from which non-human participants are depicted construct interactive meanings between the participants and the viewer.

6.2.1.2.1 The system of *Contact*

In this section, I will use Figures 6-2, 6-3 and 6-4 as examples. In Figure 6-2, there is an image of a hand holding a camera. This is a Japanese advertisement for *Minolta Cameras*. I consider this hand as a non-human participant rather than as a human participant on the grounds that there is no possibility for an exchange of *Contact* via eye contact: there is no indication of human eyes. Figure 6-3, which is a Japanese advertisement for an *AIWA Hi-Fi*, is another example that shows the use of non-human represented participants. There are images of an *AIWA Hi-Fi* set and a remote control in the advertising text. The remote control is placed pointing away from the viewer and there is a ray emanating from it. Figure 6-4 is an advertisement for a Japanese health drink called *Yakult*. There are images of the products which are placed on the left hand side of the text: the images of three bottles of *Yakult*.

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I will now consider the representation of non-human participants in terms of the interactive meaning of *Contact.* The hand holding a camera and the Hi-Fi set with a remote control cannot manifest the Interpersonal meaning of *Contact* in the same manner as human participants do because of the lack of the potential for eye contact in these (non-human) participants. In the *AIWA Hi-Fi* advertisement, the image of the remote control, is placed as though it was ready for the viewer to use. The positioning of this control allows the viewer to face towards the Hi-Fi machine (when the imaginary viewer holds the control) in a similar way as it is operated in reality. In the case of the *Minolta Camera* advertisement, the lens of the camera is pointing towards the viewer, in the manner that it would in order to take a photograph. The viewer is placed in the position where his or her photograph will be taken, by the person whose hand is holding the camera. Compared to these two examples, the advertisement of *Yakult* (Figure 6-4) represents its image of the products in a more neutral way in that these images are presented so as to be looked at by the viewer.

It can be argued that the non-human represented participants interact with the viewer in that they *fix* the viewer in a certain position (in the case of Figure 6-2) or visually encourage the viewer to take a certain imaginary action (in Figure 6-3). I would argue that these interactive meanings should be considered as an equivalent of *Demand Contact* in meaning making through human represented participants: they manifest the interactive meaning of action promoting. Both are visual images (non-human represented participants) that suggest the viewer do something, or take some action.

By contrast, the non-human represented participants (the images of *Yakult*) in Figure 6-4 do not operate in the same way in relation to the viewer: the images of the product do not locate the viewer in a particular position in relation to the product, instead they are

there to provide *objective* information about the product: what a bottle of *Yakult* looks like. The way in which these images are represented does not suggest any particular imaginary action for the viewer to take, unlike the case of Figures 6-2 and 6-3 where the representation of non-human participants 'demands' certain imaginary actions. In other words, the images of *Yakult* bottles in Figure 6-4 present themselves as though they were 'specimens'. In this respect, these non-human participants realise a similar meaning to that which is realised by *Offer Contact* in human represented participants. They do not interact directly with the viewer in the sense that they do not visually encourage the viewer to take certain imaginary actions; they 'offer' themselves as visual objects in relation to the viewer.

As these three examples (Figures 6-2, 6-3 and 6-4) show, the system of *Contact* (*Demand* or *Offer*) can be applied not only to human participants but also to non-human participants, although they are produced in a different manner: human represented participants formally realise the system of *Contact* through the choice of eye contact with the viewer, while non-human represented participants can indicate the type of *Contact* (*Demand* or *Offer*), depending on the degree of imaginary actions available to the viewer. When non-human participants are represented so as to interact with the viewer in a manner that invites certain actions in the viewer, the interaction can be considered parallel to *Demand.* When they do not imply any imaginary action on the part of the viewer, the represented participant manifests *Offer Contact.*

6.2.1.2.2 The system of *Attitude*

The previous examples (Figures 6-2, 6-3 and 6-4) are concerned with the system of *Contact* in particular. In this section, I will focus on the interactive meaning of *Attitude*,

realised in the representation of non-human represented participants. I am going to use Japanese car advertisements (Figures 6-5 and 6-6) to make my points here. Figure 6-5 is an advertisement for the *Subaru Forester* and Figure 6-6 is for the *Toyota Starlet.* I would now like to draw attention particularly to the way in which images of cars in these examples manifest interactive meaning through the markers of *Attitude.*

The car in Figure 6-5 is photographed from a low angle, which creates the interactive meaning of *Representation power.* The viewer is placed in a position where he or she looks up to the image of the car. In the case of the *Toyota Starlet* advertisement, by contrast, the photographed car is taken from a high angle, which manifests the attitudinal meaning of *Viewer power.* This positions the viewer where he or she 'looks down on' the commodity.

What does this differentiation in the meaning of *Attitude* (*'Attitudinal meaning'*) between these two advertisements suggest in terms of Interpersonal meaning making between the advertised commodity (cars) and the viewer's standpoint? In other words, the question is in what way the choice of formal representation through the system of *Attitude* realises and constructs the relationship between represented participants and the viewer. My argument is that the different *Attitudinal meaning* is related to the price range of each car. The *Subaru Forester*, advertised in Figure 6-5 is more expensive than *Toyota Starlet* in Figure 6-6, and the choice of *Attitudinal meanings* between *Representation power* and *Viewer power* is related to the 'values' of the commodity.

In Figure 6-6, there is an emphasis on the price of the car, which is indicated in a speech balloon, which emanates from the female participants on the right hand side of the text: *"I wonder why it costs only 888,000 yen* [approximately £4,400] *when it is equipped with a first-rate mechanism like this."* The *Toyota Starlet* is for everyone,

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because it is reasonably priced for its performance, in other words, the advertisement's message is that it is a car 'within one's reach'.

It can be argued, therefore, that the accessibility of the *Toyota Starlet,* as against the *Subaru Forester,* is formally coded through the use of the interactive markers of *Attitude.* The latter is a kind of car the viewer has to 'look up to', in the sense that the car is not for everyone, but only for those who can afford it, while the former is more accessible and affordable. Thus the sense of 'exclusiveness' and 'accessibility' (or 'affordability') are coded by the manipulation of *Representation power* and *Viewer power.*

6.2.1.3 Use of colour and Contextualisation

I will now consider the way in which the *Use of colour* and *Contextualisation* creates interactive meanings. I will refer back to the examples (Figures 4-1, 5-26, 5-27, 6-5 and 6-6) that have been discussed in terms of interactive markers of *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude* in ***6.2.1.1*** and ***6.2.1.2***. I will draw attention to two sets of advertisements for similar products: beverage advertisements (Figures 4-1, 5-26 and 5-27) and car advertisements (Figures 6-5 and 6-6). I am comparing different examples of advertisements for a similar range of commodities for the purpose of focusing closely on the effect of colour and the way in which a context is represented. That is, I examine the role of colours and contexts: how they differentiate, for example, one car advertisement from another.

6.2.1.3.1 Beverage advertisements

Firstly I will focus on the use of colour in the represented participants. Compared to Figures 4-1 and 5-27, the represented participants in Figure 5-26 are shown with lower

colour differentiation, in that not only the human represented participants are dressed in black, as against in multiple colours as in the case of Figures 4-1 and 5-27. The background of these human participants is toned down as a black and white landscape, while Figure 4-1 has a pattern of light yellow dots in its background and Figure 5-26 has a white background. A lower degree of colour differentiation in Figure 5-26 gives the text an overall tone of serenity and sombreness, whereas a greater differentiation in colours (Figures 4-1 and 5-27) creates a sense of accentuation.

In terms of *Contextualisation*, the three examples can be divided into two categories, depending on the degree to which the human represented participants are contextualised. Both Figures 4-1 and 5-27 are less contextualised, compared to Figure 5-26, in that the former lacks the detailed representation of the background, while the latter is given a specific background setting. For example, the represented participants in Figures 4-1 and 5-27 have a plain background and a plain white background, respectively. Figure 5-26, by contrast, shows a more detailed and specific location in which the human participants are placed in the text: a wintry field.

The question to ask here is: what does the difference in the degree of *Contextualisation* between these examples suggest in terms of interactive meaning making? In the case of Figures 4-1 and 5-27, there is a lower degree of *Contextualisation* than in Figure 5-26. My argument is that the decontextualised represented participants in Figures 4-1 and 5-27 are represented as something 'general' and 'stereotypical' as opposed to something 'specific' in a specific and definite context, which is fully realised, as in Figure 5-26. *Decontextualisation*; the lack of the indication of a specific moment in time, places and occasion can suggest that the advertised product is for any time and any place, rather than for a specific occasion. In this way, *Decontextualisation* can

manifest visual elements in the manner in which they are beyond time and location, and this can suit a commercial strategy: a wide marketing range of the advertised product.

The notion of *Contextualisation* and Decontexualisation can be considered in relation to a linguistic device called *lexicalisation*[38]. A high degree of *Contextualisation* in the domain of the visual semiotic can closely be located towards *Overlexicalisation* and *Decontextualisation* towards *Underlexicalisation* on the cline of the degree of *lexicalisation.*

6.2.1.3.2 Car advertisements

I will look at Figure 6-5 and Figure 6-6 first of all in terms of the use of colour: *colour saturation; colour differentiation; colour modulation.* With respect to *colour saturation,* Figure 6-5 makes use of a greater degree of *colour saturation* than Figure 6-6, in that more visual elements are represented in colours in the former than the latter. Figure 6-6 has a greater degree of *colour differentiation* than Figure 6-5, and this helps the coloured elements in Figure 6-6 to stand out from the plain background. The degree of *colour modulation* in Figure 6-5 is greater than that in Figure 6-6, in the sense that the former makes use of many different shades of brownish colours, whereas the latter uses a rather plain and less modulated colour range.

Now I will turn to the *Contextualisation* of these two examples. Figure 6-5 has a fully contextualised background for the image of the commodity. It is set in a field in a mountain site, in other words, this is a *naturalistic* representation, which could be observed in everyday reality. Figure 6-6, by contrast, is less and differently

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[38]The notion of *lexicalisation* is initially proposed by Critical Linguists, such as Fowler et al (1979), Fowler (1991), Hodge and Kress (1979) and Trew (1979).

contextualised from Figure 6-5. It is less contextualised in the sense that its context is not fully depicted but positioned on a plain white background: there is no detailed representation of the background in which the commodity car is placed. Figure 6-6 is also differently contextualised in that it makes use of a cartoon graphic device, as opposed to a photographic representation in Figure 6-5. In terms of 'coding orientation', *Contextualisation* in Figure 6-6 has a lower degree of *naturalistic* everyday life representation, in comparison to that of Figure 6-5, which shows a fully contextualised naturalistic everyday life setting.

The question is what this difference in the degree of *Contextualisation*: the specific and full *Contextualisation* in Figure 6-5 represents compared with the non-specific *Decontextualisation* in Figure 6-6 in terms of Interpersonal meaning making between the advertisements and the viewer. In relation to the presentation of the commodity, it may be said that the high degree of *Contextualisation* in Figure 6-5 manifests a sense of 'exclusiveness' and 'particularity', which specifies a more precise consumership: the *Subaru Forester* is a 'Sports Vehicle' which is suited for the use of people who are interested in outdoor activities. The photographic representation of context helps to convey the sense of an authentic environment in which a car like this can be most appropriate.

Decontextualisation in Figure 6-6, by contrast, can realise the represented participants as 'non-specific' and 'general' elements and this gives rise to a sense of 'accessibility' of the commodity as opposed to the 'exclusiveness' and 'particularity' of the commodity, as is seen in Figure 6-5. There is a representation of non-specific and everyday life reality: a couple are depicted as talking to each other in the 'street', which is not specified and this non-specificness is manifested by the use of cartoon-like representation (which

is a more away from everyday reality) in the background.

It has to be noted here that cartoon-like images can produce a lower degree of *Contextualisation* in a different way from the photographic representation. By the same token, cartoon images can realise a detailed contextualisation and so can photographic images. However, no matter how detailed contextualisation is achieved in cartoon images, photographic images with the same degree of contextualisation have a different potentiality in terms of the realisation of 'everyday life' *naturalistic coding orientation*[39]. With the same degree of contextualisation, photographic images can manifest a higher degree of modality values than cartoon images. (The background of Figure 6-6 would have carried a higher degree of modality values in terms of *naturalistic coding orientation* if photographic images instead of cartoon-like images had been used.)

The choice of the degree of *Contextualisation* creates a certain relationship between what is depicted in the advertisements and where the viewer stands. When it is fully contextualised (like Figure 6-5), it tends to construct a particular type of viewer (which includes prospective customers), and when it is decontextualised, it tends to allow an advertised commodity to be targeted at a wider range of consumership.

6.2.2 Summary

Using Japanese advertising texts, this section has focused on how human and non-human represented participants manifest their interactive meanings with the viewer. With respect to the system of *Contact,* first of all, two types of represented participants manifest the meaning of *Demand* and *Offer* in a different way. In the case of human

[39]Kress and van Leeuwen (1996:170)

represented participants, the formal representation (with or without the presence of eye contact), with the help of lexis (such as 'smiling' and 'frowning',which accompany the formal features) realise the interactive meaning of *Contact.* Non-human participants can also realise either *Demand Contact* or *Offer Contact*, depending on the degree to which they locate the viewer in an 'imaginary' position.

In terms of the interactive meaning of *Social Distance,* both human and non-human represented participants can manifest this by the distance from which visual participants are represented to the viewer. Visual participants, whether or not they are human or non-human, which are represented to have a relatively smaller distance from the viewer manifest a 'closer' and a more 'personal' relationship between the participants and the viewer, than when they are represented to have a greater distance. The system of *Social Distance* can not only realise a sense of 'remoteness' as opposed to that of 'closeness' between the world the represented participants are depicted in and the viewer, but also a sense of 'exclusiveness' as against that of 'commonness' or 'abundance', as is demonstrated in the case of the *Happoen* advertisement (Figure 6-1).

The system of *Attitude* can be expressed by human participants and non-human participants. For both people and objects can be depicted by a horizontal angle from which they are shot (*Frontal* or *Oblique*) and also they can be photographed from various vertical angles (*Representation power, Equal power* or *Viewer power*). The choice of these formal features can be read as a manifestation of the power relationship between the represented participants and the viewer. Alternatively, my discussion of the examples in Figures 6-5 and 6-6 suggests that the degree of accessibleness as a commodity can also be coded, depending on the type of *Attitudinal meaning* opted for : *Representation power* can suggest a higher price range of commodity (Figure 6-5), compared to the case in

which *Viewer power* is used where a sense of accessibility can be coded (Figure 6-6).

6.3 INTERPERSONAL MEANING MAKING ACROSS CULTURES: A COMPARISON OF JAPAN AND BRITAIN

The previous section focused on the issue of interactive meaning making exclusively in Japanese examples. There I did not include my textual analysis of British examples on the grounds that I broadly accept what has been done by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) in relation to the Interpersonal meaning making in Western visual semiotics.

Kress and van Leeuwen draw their examples of Western visual representations from school textbooks, a poster and paintings as well as advertisements, to which they apply the system of *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude* and through which they consider the notion of *modality:* they are concerned with the way in which visual syntax (or formal structures) construct the relationship between represented participants and the viewer, and the 'world' of visual representations in relation to the viewer in everyday life.

Given that, the present section will compare Interpersonal meaning making between Japanese and British advertising texts. It can be assumed, from what has been discussed in Chapter V, that advertising texts from the two different cultures manifest Interpersonal functions in different ways. I will draw attention to how the systems of *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude*, together with the *Use of colour* and *Contextualisation* are realised in the sample given texts, and what the systematic differences, if any, can suggest or reveal about underlying Japanese and British semiotic systems.

I will use two sets of Japanese and British examples, which are campaigns for the same products, which cross the cultural boundaries of Japan and Britain. The first set of

examples is an advertisement for hair care products, called *Organics* and the second set of examples is taken from a Japanese and British campaign for the *De Beers Diamond Ring*. On a general level, in both cases, there is a similarity in the style of advertisements, in the sense that both Japanese and British examples use the same type of represented participants and in a similar layout. However, I would like to explore whether there is any cultural specificness in the way these represented participants are engaged in meaning making in the Interpersonal dimension. I will start with the analysis of human represented participants in the texts; and follow this with a discussion around the representation of non-human represented participants.

6.3.1 Textual analysis

6.3.1.1 Human represented participants

Example 1 Organics

Figures 6-7 and 6-8 show a Japanese and a British advertisement for *Organics,* respectively. Figure 6-7 is taken from the Japanese women's magazine *With*, and Figure 6-8 is from the British women's magazine *Marie Claire.* Both advertisements appeared at approximately the same time (June 1996), and they are both two-page spreads.

In the case of the Japanese example, there is a Japanese-looking woman with long straight dark hair, which reaches down to her chest. She is wearing a multi-coloured dress. She has make-up on, with red nail varnish on her left hand, which is resting on her chest. In the British example, there is an image of a Western woman, with long wavy hair, which is 'standing up on end'. She has a touch of make-up and is photographed with a mid shot: her body is shown down to her shoulders.

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Example 2 De Beers Diamond Ring

Figures 6-9 and 6-10 are a Japanese and a British advertisement for the *De Beers Diamond Ring*, respectively. The former is taken from the Japanese women's magazine *With*, and the latter appeared in the British women's magazine *Cosmopolitan*. As in the previous examples (Figures 6-7 and 6-8), these advertisements were released at around the same time (in November and December 1997). The types of represented participants they include are similar in both examples: there is one female represented participant against a dark background. In the Japanese example, the woman is depicted clasping her hands in front of her face. The British woman in Figure 6-10 shows her left hand over the lower part of her face. Both have an image of the advertised product as non-human participants: a diamond ring (in Figure 6-9) and images of diamond stones (in Figures 6-9 and 6-10), although they are placed in different parts of the text.

6.3.1.1.1 The system of *Contact*

First of all, I would like to focus on the system of *Contact* in the first set of examples (*Example 1* hereafter: the *Organics* advertisements) Figures 6-7 and 6-8. The human represented participant in Figure 6-7 is not engaged in eye contact with the viewer: the *Offer Contact*. She is looking down slightly, while the female participant in Figure 6-8 is depicted with eye contact, smiling at the viewer: *Demand Contact*. It can be said that the former is engaged in a 'passive' interaction and the latter is in an 'active' interaction, because the *Offer Contact* in the Japanese looking woman makes herself 'to be looked at', without any direct contact with the viewer and the *Demand Contact* in the British woman is highly interactive with the viewer through eye contact.

With respect to the second set of examples (*Example 2* hereafter: *De Beers* diamond

ring advertisements), the Japanese model in Figure 6-9 has *Offer Contact*, without any direct eye contact with the viewer represented; she is depicted as looking down, while 'smiling'. This Japanese model therefore interacts with the viewer with a formal marker of *Offer*, which is accompanied by the lexis 'smiling'. The British model in Figure 6-10, on the other hand, is represented with *Demand Contact* in that she has direct eye contact with the viewer; more precisely, the interactive meaning is created which consists of a formal realisation of *Demand Contact* and a lexical feature 'smiling'. Although both are smiling, the degree of the smile is different between the two examples: the Japanese model is more 'subtly' smiling than the British model, who presents an 'explicit' or 'wide' smile.

I now consider what this choice of *Contact* types (*Offer* in the Japanese examples in Figures 6-7 and 6-9; *Demand* in the British examples in Figures 6-8 and 6-10) might be suggesting about the cultures of Japan and Britain, in relation to the depiction of women, given that culturally and socially accepted or determined values can be encoded in the choice of interactive markers. The use of *Offer* in the Japanese examples might be read as a manifestation of what Japanese women are 'expected to be like' in Japanese society, that is, they are something that is passive and to be 'looked at', or 'visually appreciated'. In other words, the interactive meaning *Offer Contact* can realise a culturally accepted image of women. With respect to the British examples (Figures 6-8 and 6-10), the *Demand Contact* in the female participants represents them as more *actively interactive* in relation to the viewer, compared to their Japanese counterparts. It might follow, therefore, that the *Demand* type of *Contact* is realising a 'culturally favoured' image of women in British society.

6.3.1.1.2 The system of *Social Distance*

I now focus on interactive meanings realised by the system of *Social Distance*. In the case of *Example 1* (Figure 6-7 and 6-8), the Japanese model is photographed with a longer shot than the British model. The former shows her body 'from upper waist up' (a mid shot), which creates *Far personal distance* and the latter is photographed in the manner that reveals the head and shoulders (a close up), which realises *Close personal distance*[40]. In other words, the formal representation of 'a close up' functions as a signifier of 'closer' distance between the represented participant and the viewer than that of 'a mid shot'. The Japanese model in Figure 6-7 has a greater *Social Distance* from the viewer than the British one in Figure 6-8. The type of *Social Distance* the British model is engaged in locates the viewer in a closer position in relation to her, while the Japanese models are shown at a greater distance from the viewer.

In the case of *Example 2* (Figures 6-9 and 6-10), both the Japanese and the British participants are shown at the same distance from the viewer: only their head and shoulders are shown, which is categorised as *Close personal distance*[41]. This might imply therefore, these participants (both Japanese and British models) are represented as someone who is 'close to' the viewer, in other words, a sense of personal relation between the participants and the viewer is created. The representation of the participants in a relatively close proximity to the viewer can convey the message 'it could happen to you [the viewer]' or it could be you'.

Just as the choice of *Contact* can represent the cultural value systems of Japan and

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[40] Hall (1964) *Fields of Vision*

[41] Hall (1964) *Fields of Vision*

Britain, it may be argued that the system of *Social Distance* also encodes cultural specificness in value systems. Here I will particularly note the difference in the realisation of the type of *Social Distance* between the two texts in *Example 1* (Figure 6-7 and 6-8), on the grounds that the difference in the choice of *Social Distance* each human participant is represented with might be interpreted in relation to accepted social distance in each culture. The Japanese participant (Figure 6-7) represented with greater distance from the viewer can be a representation of the accepted social distance in Japanese culture, where people tend to maintain greater social distance to each other in public, in comparison to that in British culture.

6.3.1.1.3 The system of *Attitude*

Regarding the system of *Attitude* in *Example 1,* the Japanese female model in Figure 6-7 is photographed from a lower angle, which realises *Representation power.* The British model (Figure 6-8) is photographed with *Equal power.* The former angle from which the represented participant is depicted makes them slightly 'looking down on' the viewer, in other words, the *Representation power* angle positions the viewer so as to 'look up to' the represented participants. The latter type of angle: *Equal power* locates the viewer at the same level with that of the viewer.

In the case of *Example 2,* I would like to note, first of all, the choice of *Frontal* and *Oblique angles* from which the Japanese and the British models are photographed. The British model in Figure 6-10 is depicted as facing the viewer with full involvement, being 'straight on', which is created by the use of the *Frontal angle* in use. The *Oblique angle* from which the Japanese model is taken makes her appear as if she was facing the viewer at a slight angle, which can imply partial involvement, as opposed to full involvement.

I now focus on what can be derived from the choice of the system of *Attitude.* Regarding *Example 1,* the significance of the difference between *Representation power* in the Japanese example (Figure 6-7) and the choice of *Equal power* in the British example (Figure 6-8). The latter type of angle creates a sense of a closer interaction between the represented participants and the viewer, compared to the case of the Japanese example, because the representation of the British model is at equal eye level it gives a sense of greater proximity to the viewer than from the Japanese represented participants, taken from a lower angle. *Representation power* in the Japanese model, by contrast, gives rise to a sense of 'remoteness' and 'aloofness' from the viewer. Also *Representation power* in this Japanese participant allows stronger control (power) as an ideal: literally someone to look up to.

In the case of *Example 2,* the *Oblique angle* from which the Japanese model is photographed (in Figure 6-9) creates a sense of detachment from the viewer, in comparison to its British counterpart (Figure 6-10), where the *Frontal angle* enables the participant to be represented as a more closely interactive figure in relation to the viewer.

The difference in the formal realisation of *Attitudinal meanings* between the Japanese and the British examples in *Examples 1* and *2* may have cultural implications, which are specific to each culture. As is the case with the system of *Contact* and *Social Distance,* discussed earlier, the fact that the Japanese and the British model are represented with different meanings of *Attitude* in relation to the viewer might also represent a particular aspect of Japanese and British cultural value systems. The fact that the Japanese models in Figures 6-7 and 6-9 are given *Representation power* while the British models in Figures 6-8 and 6-10 are in *Equal power* relation to the viewer suggests that the individual viewer for the Japanese examples is given less power over the represented

participants compared to that of the British examples. This might imply one aspect of Japanese cultural value system where a figure of 'authority' (such as a person in an advertisement or the institution they represent) is put before individuals.

The *Oblique angle* from which the Japanese model is taken (in Figure 6-9) represents these participants as 'distanced' from the viewer. In other words, the formal feature (the use of *Oblique angle*) therefore serves as a signifier of the 'remoteness' of the represented participant from the viewer. This type of interactive meaning of *Attitude* might be serving as a formal manifestation of the Japanese cultural value system, with respect to women's position in society, where women are supposed to be less forward and more subservient.

With respect to the representation of the British cultural value system, a sense of closer interaction created by the choice of the *Frontal angle* with the meaning of *Involvement* can be a reflection of different values, which is related to its representation of the image of women as much more forward and closely interactive figures, in comparison to Japanese women's 'passiveness' and 'remoteness'.

6.3.1.2 Non-human represented participants

Example 1 Organics

Both examples (Figures 6-7 and 6-8) represent images of the advertised products: bottles of hair care products. In Figure 6-7, there are images of six different kinds of product, which are placed to the right of the human represented participant. Figure 6-8 has images of a bottle of shampoo and one of conditioner, which are located in the right hand side corner of the text.

Example 2 De beers diamond ring

With respect to *Example 2*, I will focus on images of diamond rings, as examples of non-human represented participants. In both examples, the female models are depicted to be wearing a diamond ring on their finger. There is also an image of a diamond ring (placed separately from the one the human participant is wearing) and images of diamond stones in the Japanese example (Figure 6-9). The British example (Figure 6-10) has images of diamond stones which are placed in a row (placed in the bottom right part of the text) and an individual diamond stone below the image of the woman.

6.3.1.2.1 The system of *Contact*

In both cases (*Examples 1* and *2*), these images of the products (hair care products in *Example 1* and diamond rings and stones in *Example 2*) are engaged in the *Offer Contact*, in the sense that they are not represented in the manner of action promoting (c.f. Figures 6-2 and 6-3); they are there to provide information about the products, rather than encouraging the viewer to engage in 'imaginary' actions. They are there to be 'looked at' and perhaps 'to be appreciated' in the case of *Example 2.*

6.3.1.2.2 The system of *Social Distance*

Both in the case of *Example 1* and *Example 2*, Japanese examples present their products with a larger size than their British counterparts: the images of products in Japanese advertisements have a closer *Social Distance* from the viewer than British ones. For example, the bottles of *Organics* hair care products in Figure 6-7 are represented as larger than the ones in Figure 6-8. Although Figures 6-9 and 6-10 have a similarity in the presentation of their commodity, the difference between the two lies in the fact that while

the Japanese version of *De Beers diamond ring* advertisement (Figure 6-9) has an enlarged image of a diamond ring, the British example does not.

6.3.1.2.3 The system of *Attitude*

With respect to the system of *Attitude* seen in the representation of non-human participants, I will note particularly the case of *Example 1.* Both advertisements (Figures 6-7 and 6-8) have in common the choice of the type of *Attitude.* The images of the products are represented from a frontal angle, and with the *Equal power.* The frontal angle manifests a sense of *Involvement*, which allows the images of products to be fully 'displayed' to the viewer, at the expense of the representation of 'depth' of the products.

Thus, to sum up, the non-human represented participants in the Japanese and the British examples across *Examples 1* and *2* share similar interactive meanings in terms of the systems of *Contact* and *Attitude*; it is the system of *Social Distance*, that differentiates the Japanese (Figures 6-7 and 6-9) and the British (Figures 6-8 and 6-10) advertisements. This is exemplified in the case of a comparison between Figures 6-7 and 6-8 (*Example 1*): the products in the Japanese text (Figure 6-7) are depicted as a larger size than the products in the British example (Figure 6-8), or in other words, the products in the former example realise a closer distance from the viewer than these in the British example.

Also in the comparison between Figures 6-9 and 6-10, the Japanese example (Figure 6-9) presents the image of diamond rings more explicitly than the British one (Figure 6-10). For in the former text, there is a separate image of a diamond ring, apart from the one that is worn by the female model, which is not the case of the latter text.

In this way, the non-human participants in the Japanese examples (Figures 6-7 and 6-9) are represented with the type of *Social Distance* that allows the viewer a closer

examination of its advertised products than their British counterparts (Figures 6-8 and 6-10), where the images of the products are represented at a greater distance from the viewer. This tendency might be interpreted in terms of its cultural implication: the fact that the Japanese examples depict their products at a closer distance to the viewer might suggest that the visual representation of the images of the actual products are more significant in the making of Japanese advertisements, compared to that of the British advertisements.

6.3.1.3 Use of colour and Contextualisation

6.3.1.3.1 Use of Colour

The two texts in *Example 1* (Figures 6-7 and 6-8) both use bluish colours for their background; the Japanese example uses blue in a brighter shade: a lower degree of *colour modulation* than that of the British example. Similar brownish colours are used for the ground on which the models are presented to be standing in both texts, although there is a difference in the lightness of the shade between the two examples: the Japanese one makes use of a darker shade of brown than the British one. Both examples represent the products in the same colours: a green background and white letters, with a touch of red.

With respect to *Example 2*, both the Japanese and British examples have a low degree of *colour saturation*: an almost black and white representation of colours. Yet, to be precise, there is a slight difference in the shade of black between them. The British example has a lighter shade of black around the figure of the model, which looks almost like dark brown rather than black. In the Japanese text (Figure 6-9), the model's face and hands stand out against the dark black background, leaving the boundary between the model and its background ambiguous. In the British example (Figure 6-10) there is a

light white part in the background of the British model, which marks a clearer boundary between the model and the background space.

Now I would like to consider what can be derived from the use of colour in these texts (*Examples 1* and *2*). First, I will focus on what can be said about the campaign for *Organics* (*Example 1*). It can be noted that across the Japanese and the British campaigns, the use of blue and green play a part in creating a sense of 'freshness' or 'cleanliness'. In other words, the depiction of blue skies and the green colour of the products function as interactive factors in that they offer positive implications in association with hair care: being clean, fresh and natural. In this sense, the choice of colours in the *Organics* advertisements exemplifies the case where interactive meanings are closely related to the commercial strategy.[42]

In the case of the *De Beers* campaigns (Figures 6-9 and 6-10), the use of black and white (with a low degree of *colour saturation*) has to be noted. Given that they are advertisements for a diamond engagement ring, it may be suggested that the use of monochrome colours functions to symbolise formality and ritual. Black and white have an association with formal ceremonies and social occasions, as opposed to informal and personal activities. (For example, some documentaries and news photographs use black and white representations, which has similar associations. A further reason for the absence of colour is that the diamond is a clear 'white' jewel. This is represented in the background.)

What makes the Japanese example different from its British counterpart lies in that the

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[42] However, it has to be noted that in order for certain colours to be associated with particular meanings they are subject to individual cultural values. (Some cultures might not associate blue and green with freshness.)

boundary between the human participant and the background in the former is blurred because of its dark background, whereas in the latter case, the white patch of the background makes the model figure stand out against the background. The British model is represented more clearly from the background, while the Japanese participant is 'sunk' in its dark background. I would read this difference in terms of the cultural value systems of Japan and Britain. To me, the blurred boundary between the female model and its background in the Japanese example is an implication of the socially encapsulated individual: what is manifested here is a weaker sense of individualism. The clear boundary in the British example can be, by contrast, a realisation of a stronger sense of individualism in the society, where the rights and freedom of individuality is more highly appreciated, in comparison to Japanese society.

6.3.1.3.2 *Contextualisation*

Regarding *Example 1*, both advertisements have a low degree of *Contextualisation*, in that they make use of a plain background; the Japanese example has images of the products, accompanied by verbal copy, in a setting of open ground, while the British example shows a setting, a depiction of a dune-like field and blue skies, which does not give a sense of a precise location of the setting.

As is the case with *Example 1*, both texts of *Example 2* have decontextualised backgrounds: both the Japanese and the British human participants appear against a plain background, without any specific sense of orientation of where these models are located.

It may be safe to say, therefore, that these two sets of advertisements, which cross cultural boundaries of Japan and Britain have a similar type of *Contextualisation*: neither of the examples has a high degree of contextualisation and they can be described as

decontextualised representations of human represented participants. None of the human participants in the examples (Figures 6-7 to 6-10) are 'set' in a specific context. For example, the female models in the *Organics* shampoo advertisements could, for example, have been depicted as standing in a bathroom, or the female models in the *De Beers Diamond Ring* campaigns could have been represented in the company of friends at a party. The fact that these advertisements have a decontextualised representation of the human participants might imply that the advertised products (hair care products in the case of *Example 1* and a diamond ring in *Example 2*) have an unrestricted range in their market: the user or buyer of the commodity could be 'you'. In that they do not set any specific time, place and occasion in which the human participants are depicted, in other words, by decontextualising these human participants from any specific contexts, it can be possible to manifest a sense of 'widely available' and 'general' as against a sense of 'exclusiveness' and 'peculiarity'.

6.3.2 Summary

In this section, I have examined two sets of advertisements in order to see how similarly and differently the Japanese and British examples manifest the Interpersonal function: the manifestation of interactive meanings between represented participants and the viewer. Both sets of advertisements (*Examples 1* and *2*) are campaigns for the same product: advertisements that cross the cultural boundaries of Japan and Britain.

Across the two sets of examples, the Japanese and the British advertisements consist of similar lexical items, in terms of the type of represented participants in use. For example, in the case of *Example 1*, both the Japanese and the British texts show the image of a female participant in a similar background, together with images of the

products. The Japanese and the British campaign for the *De Beers Diamond Ring* have a similar organisation of what is represented in that each has an image of a female model, who is wearing a diamond ring, placed against a plain background.

It is the level of formal or syntactical realisation that differentiates the Japanese examples (Figures 6-7 and 6-9) and the British examples (Figures 6-8 and 6-10), in terms of interactive meaning making between the represented participants and the viewer. Most notably, as far as the examples I have dealt with in this section are concerned, the Japanese model and the British model are represented in a different system of interactive markers, which gives rise to different interactive meanings between them.

In the case of both *Examples 1* and *2,* it can be pointed out that the Japanese models tend to be depicted with a sense of 'passiveness', looking away from the viewer, and the British models are, by contrast, represented as more 'active' and 'forward' figures. The choice of one interactive marker instead of another realises this tendency. For example, the Japanese models both in Figure 6-7 and 6-9 are engaged in the *Offer Contact*, without direct eye contact with the viewer, while their British counterparts are shown with *Demand Contact*, which allows the viewer direct contact with the participant.

The different choice of horizontal and vertical angles from which each participant is shot can also be attributed to different realisations of interactive meanings: the *Oblique angle* from which the photograph of the Japanese model in Figure 6-9 is taken makes her appear less involved with the viewer, in comparison to its British counterpart (in Figure 6-10), who is photographed with a *Frontal angle*, which suggests a fuller involvement with the viewer. While the Japanese participant in Figure 6-7 is represented with *Representation power* in relation to the viewer, the British model in Figure 6-8 is photographed from the eye level of the viewer (*Equal power*). Overall, due to the choice

of the interactive markers in the system of *Attitude,* the Japanese models are less interactive with the viewer than the British ones: there is a greater distance from the viewer to the Japanese participants than to the British ones.

The way in which the boundary between the represented participants and its background is realised is also worth noting here. In the case of the *De Beers* campaign, the Japanese model is depicted to be almost 'part' of her background, while there is a clearer boundary between the British model and her background, which is manipulated by the degree of *colour differentiation* in the background space. This suggests a blurred representation of the 'individual figure' in the Japanese example, as opposed to a clearer depiction of the female figure in its British counterpart.

I would now like to consider what can be drawn from these differences in the formal realisation between the Japanese and the British advertisements, when the same type of lexical items are used. It can be argued that the different choice of forms: interactive meaning markers, itself has significance in terms of the cultural values of Japan and Britain which they realise. It may be safe to say that the representation of the Japanese and the British models suggests one aspect of what is socially and culturally accepted in terms of women's position in each society. Japan is a society where women are expected to be rather 'passive', 'subservient' and 'controlled by social frameworks', compared to the accepted values for British women, which allow them to be more 'active', 'forward' and 'individualistic'.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The findings in this chapter suggest that the relationship between what is depicted in the

advertisements and the viewer can be visually manifested through the choice of one particular form instead of another.

In Chapter V, cultural values seen in the formal (or syntactical) realisation in Japanese and British advertisements have been discussed, in relation to the Ideational and the Textual functions in semiosis. This chapter has examined this issue of *culture in form*, from the Interpersonal perspective of meaning making, in other words, by looking at the way in which the represented participant in the advertisement and the viewer are formally (or syntactically) realised.

The different choice of interactive markers, such as *Contact*, *Social Distance* and *Attitude,* is not only related to what is being advertised (in the sense that they play a significant role as commercial strategies) , but also to the social and cultural environment in which a given advertisement is produced. With respect to the latter point, a different culture makes use of the formal systems of interactive meanings in a different way, realised as different manifestations of Interpersonal meaning making.

Chapter VII INTEGRATED ANALYSIS OF VISUAL LEXIS AND VISUAL SYNTAX

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The last two chapters (Chapters V and VI) have looked the way in which at Japanese and British visual semiotics in terms of visual syntax, with reference to the three meta functions: the Ideational, the Textual and the Interpersonal. There I focused on my descriptive categories of visual syntax from which I drew on the realisation of value systems of Japanese and British cultures.

In this chapter, I will consider the integration of visual lexis and visual syntax by referring back to the examples I used in Chapter IV, where I dealt only with visual lexis in semiosis. I hope to demonstrate how far these descriptive categories for visual syntax (that I have used in Chapters V and VI) can suggest more about Japanese and British cultures. In so doing, I will re-consider the Barthean approach to signs, which limits the treatment of signs at the level of a lexical unit. The aim of this chapter therefore is to consider the significance of the role of visual syntax as well as that of visual lexis, and integrate the analysis of visual syntax into what visual lexis manifests, as is discussed in Chapter IV. In other words, I will draw attention to what is the 'effect' of putting these two categories together as an integrated unit.

7.2 THE REPRESENTATION OF 'BRITISHNESS' AND 'WESTERNESS' IN JAPANESE ADVERTISEMENTS

This section will focus on two examples (Figures 4-1 and 4-2), which were discussed

from a perspective of visual lexis as the manifestation of 'Britishness' and 'Westerness' in general respectively in Chapter IV. Both examples will be analysed in terms of the descriptive categories of visual syntax (Figure 3-4).

Section *7.2.1* concerns the representation of 'Britishness'*:* I will re-focus on the advertisement for British-style tea (Figure 4-1). With respect to the Ideational metafunction, I will examine the use of visual directionality in this example in section *7.2.1.1*. As the manifestation of the Textual metafunction, I will examine use of visual space in section *7.2.1.2*. I have already dealt with the Interpersonal aspect of this advertisement (*social interactions*) in Chapter VI.

Section *7.2.2* is concerned with the representation of 'Westerness' in general in Japanese advertisements. The use of Western female models in Figure 4-2 has been discussed in Chapter IV as an example of the representation of 'Westerness' in general seen in Japanese advertisements. There, I viewed the depiction of these female models as visual lexis that serve as the *signifier* of 'Westerness'. In this chapter, I will refer back to Figure 4-2 (*Toshimaen* advertisement) in the consideration of visual directionality (section *7.2.2.1*), use of space (section *7.2.2.2*), social interactions (section *7.2.2.3*).

7.2.1 'Britishness'

7.2.1.1 Visual directionality: the Ideational metafunction

I draw attention to scriptorial directionality, which is created by verbal elements in Figure 4-1, as one type of visual directionality that creates a visual process. As I have discussed in Chapter V, language creates *Inherent directionality*. There are two kinds of *Inherent directionality* realised by verbal elements in this example: from top to bottom and from left to right. The former is realised by vertical writing that appears on the right hand side

of the text and the latter is realised by horizontal writing that is used for the rest of the copy (on the plaque-like logo at the top and the copy at the bottom).

Then what does this particular use of visual directionality suggest about the representation of 'Britishness'? While the *Inherent directionality* of top to bottom functions as one aspect of traditional 'Japaneseness' (see section **5.2**), the *Inherent directionality* of left to right, on the other hand, can realise something non-Japanese or British (or at least Western) by its association with the English writing system that runs from left to right. The fact that English writing outnumbers Japanese in this example may be related to the representation of 'Britishness'. The formal realisation through the choice of visual directionality of left to right, in other words, the choice of a particular process type forms one aspect of the Ideational metafunction for the representation of 'Britishness'.

Given that the visual directionality realised by vertical writing is a formal manifestation of 'Japaneseness' and the visual directionality realised by horizontal writing can function as a manifestation of 'Britishness', the juxtaposition of vertical and horizontal writings within this advertisement suggests another issue: the hybridity of Japanese culture.

7.2.1.2 Use of space: the Textual metafunction

There are two types of textual compositions to be considered in this advertisement: Top and Bottom and Centring structures (Vertical centrality). What is realised at the top part of the text is the product logo (*"Laceby Hall"*) and the verbal copy (written vertically: meaning *"Welcome to Laceby Hall"*) and what is realised at the bottom are verbal copy and visual images of cans of *Laceby Hall Tea.* The sense of Vertical centrality is created

by the three human represented participants who are placed in the middle of the textual space.

With respect to Top/Bottom distinction, the logo "*Laceby Hall*" and the copy "*Welcome to Laceby Hall*" realise something 'ideal' and more 'abstract' (the value of Ideal) than the images of the products and the verbal copy do: they convey more 'specific' and 'detailed' information (the value of Real). While these represented participants in the top part of the text provide the viewer with an abstract message, the actual (photographic) images of *Laceby Hall Tea* give the viewer a more 'specific' picture about what the product is like and the verbal explanation placed next to these images provide a 'detailed' account of what makes authentic British-style tea.

The three human participants (a 'butler' and two 'maids') and the plaque-like logo above them, which serve as visual lexis that represents 'Britishness', are placed in the domain of Centre. They form a core of information in terms of the representation of 'Britishness' by way of lexis and this sense of 'coreness' of these participants is reinforced by a formal (or syntactical) feature, that is, their placement in the domain of Centre. The domain of Centre allows these represented participants to manifest 'Britishness' as salient elements that are expected to draw the viewer's attention.

7.2.1.3 Social interactions: the Interpersonal metafunction

The way in which represented participants in Figure 4-1 interact with the viewer and how this is realised through the choice of formal interactive categories has been discussed in Chapter VI. I will give a summary and re-statement of interactive meanings realised in this advertising text in the light of the representation of 'Britishness'.

First of all, the three human represented participants have *Demand Contact*, with

different lexical element attached to it: 'smiling' in the female participants and 'frowning' in the male participant. The lexical realisation of 'frowning' which is combined with *Demand Contact* in the male participant presents him as 'challenging' the viewer: he is not represented as a friendly character but as an 'awkward' and stern character. This might form one aspect of 'Britishness': an image of a British man who is 'reserved', not being over-friendly.

Second, the choice of the type of *Social Distance*; which represents these participants at a relatively great distance from the viewer (*Impersonal Social Distance*) might be a realisation of not only geographically but also culturally and socially 'distanced' countries: Japan and Britain.

Thirdly, these three participants are represented as slightly 'looking down on' the viewer: *Representation power*. I would read this choice of *Attitude* as a representation of the power relationship between Japan and Britain, in which the latter is superior to the former.

The use of colour has to be pointed out here as an element that contributes to the realisation of 'Britishness'. The use of a red and green tartan check can function as *the signifier* of 'Scottishness' ('Britishness').

Finally, with respect to the *Contextualisation*, these three participants are represented in a plain context with a low degree of *Contextualisation*. This suggests that they are representations of 'Britishness' as something 'general' and 'stereotypical', rather than something 'specific'. In other words, these human participants are one 'general' and 'stereotypical' representations of 'Britishness', as perceived by the Japanese. This exemplifies a case where the manipulation of the degree of *Contextualisation* can represent a cultural stereotype.

7.2.2 'Westerness' in general

7.2.2.1 Visual directionality: the Ideational metafunction

I note two types of visual directionality: the pictorial and the scriptorial directionality regarding Figure 4-2. The former is realised by the Western models' bodies as they are depicted lying down on the beach-like background. The latter is represented by the verbal copy that appears in two places: the one (a phrase) on the bottom right and the other (a block of verbal copy) on the top left.

With respect to the pictorial directionality, the bodies of the Western models, which are stretched in various directions, create a multiple visual directionality. It is an *Inherent directionality* too, in that the Western models embody their directionality within them, rather than functioning in relation to the context. This multiple visual directionality gives a sense of 'irregularity'.

As for the scriptorial directionality, the verbal copy on the bottom right is written vertically and the other which appears at top left consists both of horizontal and vertical writing: horizontal writing using the Roman alphabet "*Toshimaen Pool*" and underneath is Japanese copy written vertically. With respect to the scriptorial directionality, in this way, there is a prominent use of the *Inherent directionality* of top to bottom, rather than that of left to right (which is represented by the English part).

To sum up, the visual directionality represented by Western visual lexis (Western models) creates a multiple and irregular type of visual directionality on the part of scriptorial directionality, on top of which the scriptorial directionality of top to bottom and that of left to right (although the former outnumbers the latter) are placed. Given that the prominent use of the directionality of top to bottom is a formal realisation of 'Japaneseness' (that implies a sense of 'traditional Japan' as opposed to 'modern and

contemporary Japan'), and that the multiple and irregular type of directionality is, by contrast, taken as a formal realisation of 'Westerness', it might follow that the visual directionality in this advertisement represents 'Japaneseness' in the form of regulated directionality of top to bottom and 'Westerness' as something 'less regulated'.

The discussion in Chapter IV pointed out a combination of Western visual lexis (as the use of Western models) and Japanese visual lexis (as the use of Japanese calligraphic characters in the presentation of the verbal copy) in Figure 4-2. Now it can be argued that this juxtaposition of things 'Japanese' and things 'Western' is observed also at the level of visual syntax: the scriptorial directionality of top to bottom as a formal realisation of 'Japaneseness' and the multiple pictorial directionality as that of 'Westerness'.

7.2.2.2 Use of space: the Textual metafunction

I consider the distribution of meaning in a visual space of Figure 4-2 in terms of the Left and Right distinction and the Centring structure. With respect to the Left and Right distinction, I draw attention to the placement of two blocks of verbal copy; the representation of seasoning for Japanese-style pancake (*okonomiyaki*) which is placed in the centre of the text plays a crucial role in the consideration of the Centring structure of this advertisement.

The presence of vertical writing (at bottom right) indicates the point of departure: that this text is read from right to left. Accordingly, the domain to which this vertical writing belongs is Given/Real, in Japanese visual semiotics (see Figure 5-33). It follows that the other block of verbal copy on the top left appears in the domain of New/Ideal.

The vertical copy on the bottom right says "*Okonomiyaki*" (meaning 'pancake' in

Japanese) and it represents the meaning of Given in the sense that *okonomiyaki* is something that is already taken for granted in Japanese culture or something already known to the members of the society. The copy *"Okonomiyaki"* also refers to something 'specific', 'down-to-earth' and 'substantial'; therefore Real.

The block of the verbal copy placed on the top left appears in the domain of New/Ideal. Here the name of the place: *"Toshimaen Pool"* is indicated in English and the Japanese copy underneath explains not only about the swimming pool but also what should be required for a public swimming pool. This realises the meaning of New in that this is information yet to be found out by the viewer and something that is 'worth paying attention to'. The copy also realises the meaning of Ideal because in its Japanese part it states what they [the advertiser] think is crucial for the services: information that is to do with an 'abstract' concept.

With respect to the Centrality, I note the positioning of the visual representation of 'seasoning' for *okonomiyaki.* As discussed in Chapter IV, the image of seasoning is visual lexis that represents 'Japaneseness' for its association with a Japanese style pancake: *okonomiyaki.* Now its positioning in the domain of Centre adds another implication to it, in other words, the formal (or syntactical) features provides additional meaning to this Japanese visual lexis: being placed in the domain of Centre, this image of seasoning is represented as something that is culturally specific and that members of Japanese society all share and take for granted (as culturally 'shared knowledge'). In Japanese visual semiotics, this is the domain in which culturally determined elements tend to be represented (c.f. the discussion of Centrality in section ***5.4.3***).

In this way, in terms of the spatial distribution of meaning, Figure 4-2 is formally (or syntactically) agreed to the system of Japanese visual semiotics rather than British. This

suggests a characteristic and ability of visual lexis and visual syntax. In Figure 4-2, although there is the prominent use of Western visual lexis, there is Japanese visual syntax at work underneath and this is not unrelated to the realisation of meaning for the representation of not only 'Westerness' but also 'Japaneseness'. If the representation through visual lexis is taken as 'overt', then visual syntax is more 'covert', underlying the presence of visual lexis. This exemplifies what visual syntax can disclose where visual lexis cannot.

7.2.2.3 Social interactions: the Interpersonal metafunction

I draw attention to the interactive meanings realised by human represented participants: Western models, with reference to the systems of *Contact*, *Social Distance* and *Attitude*.

First of all, none of the models is represented as having eye contact with the viewer: *Offer Contact*. In terms of *Social Distance*, all of them as a group are photographed with a long shot, which codes a relatively great spatial distance between the participants and the viewer: *Impersonal Social Distance*. Regarding *Attitude*, they are photographed horizontally from a frontal angle which represents the meaning of *Involvement* and also vertically from overhead (a high angle) which realises *Viewer power* to put the viewer as 'looking down on' the participants.

These formal structures can add meaning to what is suggested by the interpretation of visual lexis. For example, the *Offer Contact* positions the viewer [Japanese] where they observe these Western models. There is no direct interaction between the two parties and these models are there to be looked at as a material entity. They are also represented as 'socially distanced' from the viewer and this might suggest a 'remoteness' of the West in relation to Japan. The use of a high angle from which these models are photographed

gives the viewer a power over what they represent: 'Westerness'. The presence of *Viewer power* goes along with what Western models as visual lexis suggest. As I have discussed in Chapter IV, the bodies of Western models are reduced to 'objects' for appreciation or 'to be looked at' and this stance is reinforced by what the interactive meaning of *Viewer power* realises: the viewer is given freedom to 'look down on' these human participants who are reduced to 'objects' or just a 'material entity'.

7.3 THE REPRESENTATION OF 'JAPANESENESS' IN JAPANESE ADVERTISEMENTS IN BRITAIN

This section will focus on two examples (Figures 4-4 and 4-7). In addition to the representation of 'Japaneseness' through visual lexis which was discussed in Chapter IV, I will examine in what way visual syntax of these advertisements realises 'Japaneseness'.

Section **7.3.1** will focus on Figure 4-4 (*Kirin Lager Beer* advertisement). I will draw attention to visual directionality represented participants create in Section ***7.3.1.1***. Section ***7.3.1.2*** concerns the distribution of meaning through the positioning of represented participants in the visual space of Figure 4-4. In section ***7.3.2.3***, I will focus on the way in which represented participants construct a relationship with the viewer, through the systems of *social interactions*, such as *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude,* together with a discussion of *Use of colour* and *Contextualisation.*

Another example (Figure 4-7: *Asahi Super Dry Beer* advertisement) will be discussed in section ***7.3.2***. I will focus on the way in which represented participants create visual directionality (section ***7.3.2.1)***, and the way in which visual space is used for the realisation of meanings (section ***7.3.2.2***) and how they are related to the representation

of 'Japaneseness'.

7.3.1 Revisiting Figure 4-4: Kirin Lager Beer advertisement

7.3.1.1 Visual directionality: the Ideational metafunction

In Figure 4-4, there are two kinds of visual directionality: pictorial and scriptorial. Pictorial visual directionality is realised by images of human and non-human represented participants: an image of a man in armour, images of two women in *kimono* placed behind him and an image of a Japanese castle. Scriptorial directionality is realised by the verbal copy: copy written in Japanese kana on the top (meaning "*Kirin*") and copy that is written in English below the Japanese copy. There is more verbal copy on the bottom left: there is a juxtaposition of Japanese (written horizontally and vertically) and English copy. Figure 7-1 shows an abstract representation of visual directionality in Figure 4-4.

With respect to pictorial visual directionality, there are multiple directions created by the represented participants. The bottle the man is holding creates the *Inherent directionality* pointing upwards to the right. The image of the man's sword embodies the diagonal directionality of top left to bottom right. The images of hair pins the two women are wearing also creates upward directionality as does the image of the Japanese castle.

In terms of scriptorial visual directionality, the verbal copy in this advertisement creates the *Inherent directionality* of left to right, with the exception of the line that is written vertically placed next to an image of a bottle top. In fact, this Japanese copy in kana is written horizontally from left to right as a unit but placed in a vertical manner. Thus this advertisement has a predominant scriptorial visual directionality of left to right.

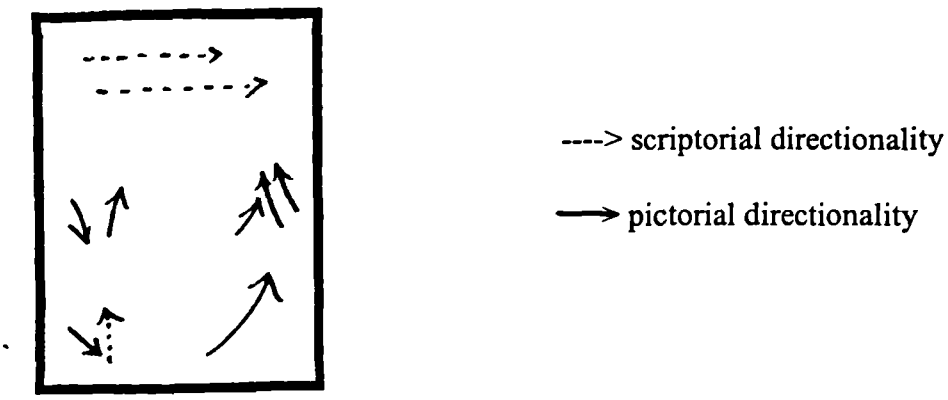

Figure 7-1 ***Visual directionality in Figure 4-4***

7.3.1.2 Use of space: the Textual metafunction

I consider the use of space in this advertisement in terms of the Top/Bottom distinction and Centrality. First, as for the way in which the Top/Bottom part of the visual space is used, the verbal copy is placed on the top and the image of the product (a bottle of *Kirin Lager Beer*) appears in the bottom part of the text. The former realises the meaning of Ideal in the sense that the verbal copy 'conceptualises' the product (the representation of the product in an 'abstract' sense), whereas the latter realises the meaning of Real because it shows the actual image of the product: something concrete and material.

Second, Figure 4-4 can also be considered in terms of Centrality: the positioning of the image of the man in the centre of the text creates a sense of Centrality. When the image of the man takes up the domain of Centre, that of the two women are positioned in a peripheral space: the domain of Margins, in other words, they function as foreground and background. This distribution of represented participants gives them particular meanings: the man is represented as more significant and 'central' than the women whose positioning realises them as something more peripheral and secondary. My argument is that this forms part of the representation of 'Japaneseness': the representation Japanese

society as a place where men literally take 'centre' stage.

7.3.1.3 Social interactions: the Interpersonal metafunction

Here I focus on the way in which particularly human represented participants realise interactive meanings in relation to the viewer in terms of *Contact, Social Distance* and *Attitude*.

First of all, all the human represented participants are depicted as having eye contact with the viewer: they have *Demand Contact*. Although these participants share the same formal features, the man and these two women have a different lexical entity attached to the *Demand Contact*. (As a result, the man is depicted with a fuller smile showing his teeth, and the women have a more subtle smile on their face.)

In terms of the system of *Social Distance*, the image of the man is photographed in a close-up (that shows his head and shoulders) and the images of the women are photographed using a longer shot (that is supposed to show the whole body but they are hidden behind the image of the man and the product). In other words, the man is represented as closer to the viewer than the women are. This difference in the choice of the system of *Social Distance*: the man is allowed closer contact with the viewer than the women, might be taken as a formal realisation of the position of men and women in Japanese society, where the man is allowed to be more 'forward' than are women.

Regarding the system of *Attitude*, the man is photographed from an oblique angle (taken from the side) while the women are photographed from a frontal angle. This formal feature suggests that the man is partially engaged and the women are fully engaged with the viewer. In terms of the power relationship realised by the choice of vertical angle, the way in which all the human represented participants are depicted has

Viewer power: these participants are represented as 'looking up to' the viewer.

These represented participants are depicted as Japanese and given that this advertisement appeared in British media, it may be said that 'Japaneseness' is represented as something to be 'looked down on' by the viewer, who is supposedly composed greatly of non Japanese people. Then, can this syntactical feature (the use of *Viewer power*) in this advertisement be read as a certain implication of cultural power relationship between Japan and Britain? More importantly, this kind of cultural representation (which is a syntactical feature) illustrates one aspect that a sole consideration of visual lexis of what is represented does not allow to reveal.

With respect to the use of colour, overall, Figure 4-4 make use of colours which are 'washed out' and 'faded', in other words, with a low degree of *colour saturation*, as opposed to a fully saturated use of colours. Also, colours which are used in this example are not presented with different shades; they are 'plain' colours: a low degree of *colour modulation.*

The lower degree of *colour saturation*, the use of 'washed out' and 'faded' colours contributes to the representation of an 'old' and 'obsolete' image of Japan, instead of a 'modern' and 'Westernised' image of Japan. The lower degree of *colour modulation* helps the represented participants in this text to look 'flat' without much 'depth', as opposed to 'with depth', which gives participants a sense of 'substantiality'. In this way, these choices of the degree of *colour saturation* and *modulation* in Figure 4-4 create 'Japaneseness' which is of 'obsolete' ('traditional' in other words) kind and 'shallow' without substantiality.

This is a particular representation of Japan (a juxtaposition of 'Japan in the past' and 'Japan now', with a larger emphasis on the former). This example has a low degree of

modality in the 'commonsense naturalistic coding orientation' in the sense that this is not an everyday life representation of 'Japaneseness'.

7.3.2 Revisiting Figure 4-7: Asahi Super Beer advertisement

7.3.2.1 Visual directionality: the Ideational metafunction

In Figure 4-7, the verbal represented participants outnumber visual represented participants: as the former, there is a character 豊 in calligraphic style and Japanese copy written also in calligraphic style on the right hand side of the text. There is also English copy, "*150 years ago we didn't have a brewing industry. We didn't make cars either*", below which is a company logo, *"Asahi---Japanese and proud of it"*. There is a single visual represented participant in this advertisement: an image of a bottle of beer.

The calligraphic Japanese copy (on the right hand side) is written vertically and this creates the *Inherent directionality* of top to bottom. English copy at the bottom of the text is written horizontally creates the *Inherent directionality* of left to right. There is no *Inherent directionality* in the calligraphic character 豊 : it does not carry any sense of direction within the element.

There is a juxtaposition of two different directionalities in this example: the indigenously Japanese visual directionality of top to bottom created by the vertical writing and the directionality of left to right created by the horizontal writing. The former type of visual directionality can be viewed as a formal representation of (traditional) 'Japaneseness' which is juxtaposed with something that represents more contemporary Japanese.

7.3.2.2 Use of space: the Textual metafunction

I consider the use of space in Figure 4-7 to be a combination of two different textual compositions: Centrality and the Left/Right distinction. The calligraphic character placed in the middle of the text creates a sense of Centrality. With respect to the Left/Right distinction, I propose that there are two sets of the Left/Right distinction at work within this text (see Figure 7-2). I call the upper section Left/Right (1) and the lower section Left/Right (2).

As I have discussed in Chapter IV, the Chinese character 豊 functions as a sign that signifies 'Japaneseness' with particular association with traditional art form as

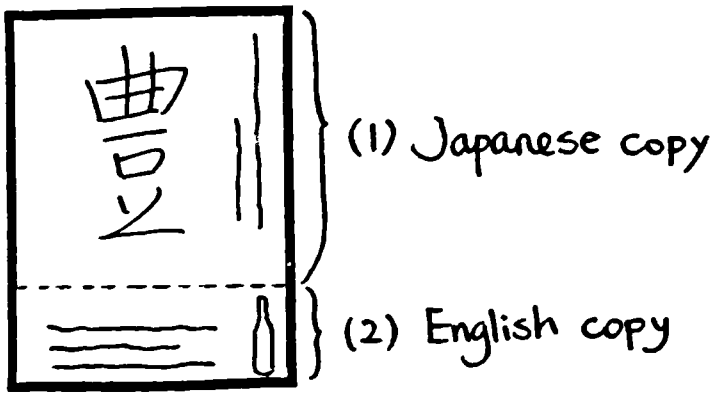

Figure 7-2 ***The distribution of Japanese/English copy in Figure 4-7***

opposed to that which is in the domain of contemporary, modern and Westernised Japan. In other words, this is a representation of 'Japaneseness' at the level of visual lexis. Now the positioning of this character, which is at the level of visual syntax, suggests another aspect of 'Japaneseness' by being placed in the domain of Centre. For, as I discussed in section ***5.4.3***, there is a prominent use of centring structures in Japanese advertisements and Centrality can function as a visual realisation of Japanese value systems. The fact that this advertisement creates a sense of Centrality by this calligraphic character itself might realise one aspect of 'Japaneseness'.

Regarding the Left/Right distinction in this advertisement, (1) consists of Japanese copy in calligraphic style and (2) consists of English copy and the visual image of *Asahi Super Dry Beer*. As for (1), it is possible to divide it into two section: where the character is on the Left and where the vertical writing is on the Right. In the case of (2), I consider where there is English copy on the Left and where there is the image of bottle of beer on the Right.

My argument of the distribution of meanings in each section is indicated in Figure 7-3. There is an opposite distribution of the information values of Given and New between (1) and (2). In section (1), the Left functions as New and the Right as Given. For the vertical writing (on the Right) explains about Japan in the past: "*We didn't have either cars or beer in the past*" and the character (on the Left) means 'richness' and 'prosperity' which refers to 'Japan now'. In (1), the Left and Right section of visual space are allocated with meanings of New and Given. In the case of (2), by contrast, the meaning of Given is realised in the Left and that of New is realised in the Right: the proposition about Japan in the past is placed in the left (Given) and a 'product' of modern Japan is realised in the form of the image of *Asahi Super Dry Beer*; therefore New.

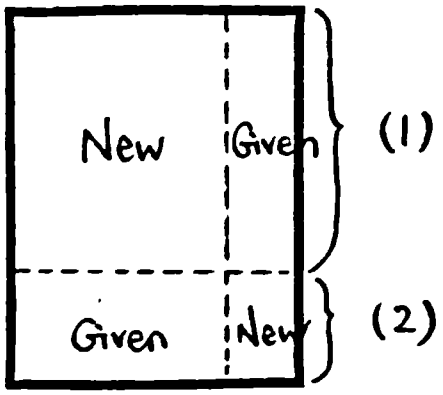

Figure 7-3 ***Given/New distribution in Figure 4-7***

7.4 CONCLUSION

I have focused on the formal structures in which represented visual participants are represented (visual syntax), in order to see to what extent the accounts of visual syntax illustrate 'Japaneseness' and 'Britishness', along with the accounts of visual lexis.

Where there is 'overt' representations of 'Britishness' and 'Westerness' in general via the use of particular visual lexis (Figures 4-1 and 4-2), visual syntax 'covertly' reveals certain aspects that are characteristic of Japanese visual semiotics. In the case of Figure 4-1, the signifiers of 'Britishness' (such as an image of an British butler and house maids dressed in clothes with a tartan-checked pattern) are placed in a context where Japanese visual directionality (a scriptorial directionality of top to bottom realised in the vertically written copy) is also at work. And this scriptorial directionality of top to bottom suggests a particular reading directionality: from right to left. Take Figure 4-2 for example, the overt use of Western female models (Western visual lexis) is juxtaposed with a scriptorial directionality of top to bottom in verbal copy, which realises one aspect of Japanese visual semiotics. In this way, these two examples show that together with the lexical representation of 'Britishness' or 'Westerness' in general lies syntactical realisation of 'Japaneseness'.

The syntactical features that indicate the Interpersonal meanings enable us to read the relationship between what is represented and the viewer. For instance, the *Demand Contact* with the lexical meaning of 'frowning' realised in the butler in Figure 4-1 can convey one aspect of 'Britishness'. Also, the geographical, cultural and social distance between Japan and Britain is coded in the choice of *Impersonal Social distance.* The choice of vertical angle from which the human participants are represented in Figure 4-1 (where they are depicted as 'looking down on' the viewer) might suggest the power

relationship between these two countries. By the same token, the way in which the Western models in Figure 4-2 are depicted (from a high angle) in relation to the viewer reveals the power relationship between the participants and the viewer, where the former is reduced to the material entity to be looked at by the latter in this context.

With respect to the representation of 'Japaneseness' in Figure 4-4 (the *Kirin Lager Beer* advertisement), there is a lexical realisation of 'Japaneseness' (which is seen in the representation of 'traditional' Japan: a Japanese man in armour and Japanese women in *kimono*) which is juxtaposed with the scriptorial directionality of left to right which signifies 'modern' and 'Westernised' Japan. In this sense, in contrast to the examples like Figures 4-1 and 4-2, Figure 4-4 has an 'overt' representation of one type of 'Japaneseness' (realised by visual lexis) and a 'covert' feature that signifies another type of 'Japaneseness' (realised by visual syntax).

In the case of Figure 4-7 (the *Asahi Super Dry Beer* advertisement), the account of visual syntax (in terms of the use of visual space) reveals a different distribution of meanings of Given and New within a single visual space: the upper part of the text has a Given and New distribution as right to left and the lower part of the text has that of left to right. It should be noted that the upper section where Japanese visual lexis (Japanese calligraphic font) is used, the distribution of Given and New follows Japanese visual semiotic and the lower section where there is British visual lexis (as English copy), the distribution of Given and New follows British visual semiotic (see Figure 5-33). This exemplifies the case where the exploration of syntactical features of visual representations can reveal what the account of visual lexis cannot: Figure 4-7 makes an overt use of Japanese visual lexis (as the salient use of a calligraphic character), which is distributed in accordance with Japanese visual semiotic, but at the same time within

the same text, there is a visual syntax at work which illustrates British visual semiotics.

In conclusion, I focus on the following questions: What is the point of integrating the account of visual lexis with that of visual syntax and to what extent the system of visual syntax reveals what cannot be revealed by visual lexis for the overall understanding of meaning making. I now consider these issues with reference to lexis-oriented analysis which is represented by the semiotic analysis of Roland Barthes (1976) in comparison to a syntax-oriented approach like Kress and van Leeuwen (1996).

Lexis-oriented analysis, which I have demonstrated in Chapter IV, can only reveal surface features of visual representations, that represent certain immediate choices made by the producer of a text: meanings that are perhaps transient and easily changed. At the level of syntax are the more deeply rooted meanings that have, over time, become taken for granted in a given culture. It is precisely these more subtle meanings that the methodology I have used, which is more syntax-oriented rather than lexis-oriented, is designed to uncover. Meaning conveyed at the level of visual syntax that have become seemingly 'intuitive' to producers of texts, may be more important to reveal than the more easily observed "content" (meaning at the lexis level), in the sense that it realises something that is more profound and fundamental to a specific socio-cultural environment in which visual representations come alive.

Chapter VIII INTEGRATED ANALYSIS OF THE VISUAL AND VERBAL ASPECTS OF TEXTUAL OBJECTS/ ADVERTISEMENTS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is two-fold: i) to explore the 'functional loads' of the visual and verbal modes and how they contribute to the making of 'textuality' in terms of spatial distribution of visual and verbal elements, and reading paths of advertising texts; ii) to consider multi-modal meaning making in cross-cultural semiosis, that is to see how the distribution of these functional loads and the way in which they provide 'textuality' are different in Japanese and British advertising texts.

With respect to the former question, I will analyse a couple of advertising texts (both Japanese and British), which have textual compositions of Left/Right; Top/Bottom; Centre/Margins, from the three aspects of *integration* (section ***3.3.3***). The latter point will be examined by comparing the three aspects in cross-cultural environments, to be precise, by comparing Japanese and British advertisements for similar types of commodity. This second question arises from the point that as the Japanese and English languages have different potentiality to realise certain functions, it can be postulated that Japanese and British cultures have their own systems of visualising certain messages.

8.2 FUNCTIONAL LOADS OF THE VISUAL AND THE VERBAL MODES AND TEXTUAL INTEGRATION

The first section of this chapter will focus on what kind of semiotic functions visual and

verbal modes convey. I will pay close attention to what the visual and the verbal mode realise and what each does and does not do in relation to each other.

Section ***8.2.1*** deals with examples with a relatively simple structure in terms of the number of elements within its visual space, compared to the fully 'articulated' type of examples with a larger number of visual participants. To begin with in section ***8.2.1.1***, I will take up the *isotype* examples. Section ***8.2.1.2*** will discuss advertising texts which consist of a small number of visual participants as opposed to a multiple number. Throughout my discussion in section ***8.2.1***, I deal with both Japanese and British examples.

Section ***8.2.2*** will focus on Japanese and British examples that consist of elements, with a more complex structure than those discussed in section ***8.2.1.*** I will examine the role of the visual and the verbal depending on the three types of textual composition I have used in Chapter V: Left/Right, Top/Bottom and Centre/Margins. I will proceed with my textual analysis thus: the Left/Right composite type, where a text can be divided vertically into two sections of left and right (section ***8.2.2.1***); the Top/Bottom composite type, where a text is divided horizontally into two sections of the upper/lower parts (section ***8.2.2.2***); the Centre/Margins composite type, where a text has a sense of textual division of centre and what surrounds the centre part (section ***8.2.2.3***).

As a procedure of my textual analysis, I will first focus on the *functional loads* of the visual and the verbal mode within a text. Secondly, I consider these *functional loads* in relation to the spatial positioning of meanings, namely to examine what load is carried by each semiotic mode. Finally, I discuss how the positioning of visual and verbal elements (which are loaded with certain functions) are *integrated* into a cohesive text through their *reading paths.*

8.2.1 Simply structured examples

8.2.1.1 the isotype

Figure 8-1 is a public sign that indicates the availability of facilities for handicapped people in a park. The message is conveyed solely through the visual mode because there is no verbal element in this 'text'. A question arises here: 'Why is the visual mode chosen to convey this message?, instead of realising through language, 'this way for a person in a wheelchair'. This type of public instructions are characterised by the fact that they are easily recognised by the viewer, in other words, the visual mode provides quicker access to recognition than the verbal mode and visual elements may be wider in their comprehensibility. The use of the colour blue serves the Interpersonal metafunctions, in the sense it conveys meanings of reliability and 'safety'.

Figure 8-2, unlike Figure 8-1, has both visual and verbal elements within the text. There is an image of a man and a dog inside a red circle, below which reads, *Maximum Penalty £100.* Under the image is a verbal instruction, *Keep Dogs On Leads.* The overall message of this text can be said in language 'Make sure you keep your dog on a lead in this area', it is a prohibition of a certain action. In other words, through the verbal mode, it creates the interactive meaning of 'Demand - goods and service'.

Then how is it realised through the visual? The visual image functions as an 'anchor' of this verbal instruction, and in fact, it represents the 'ideal' state, where a pet dog is kept on a lead by its owner. The existence of the image of a man and a dog on the lead cannot cover as much as that which is realised through language. The visual elements would have been verbally realised in the form of 'declarative mood' (Offer of information as an interactive marker), like 'A man and a dog on the lead are walking towards the right'. What is realised by the visual elements does not cover the sense of

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'warning against a certain action', this is where the use of particular colour comes to add more function to what is already realised by the images. The sense of warning (or attention provoking function) is visually carried by the use of 'red' colour in the circle around the images of a man and a dog. In this way, Figure 8-2 exemplifies the case in which each semiotic mode (visual/verbal) makes use of different resources to realise and construct the 'meaningful whole' of the textual message.

8.2.1.2 Advertisements

It is most common that advertising texts have both visual and verbal elements within them, but there are some cases that rely heavily on the visual. Figure 5-26, an advertisement of *Suntory Oolong Tea*, is an example of this type of advertisement, where the text consists of a greater amount of visual elements than of verbal elements. There is an image of a couple, a man and a woman, standing in a field and an image of the product.

In terms of the Ideational metafunction of semiosis in this text, the representation of the advertised product is conveyed through both the visual and the verbal mode. The visual mode represents the product (a can of Chinese tea) in the form of a photographic image. The verbal representation of the product is embedded within the visual elements: there is an indication of the name of the product and the company which produces it, written in Japanese.

These two semiotic modes are responsible for the meaning making of the Interpersonal metafunctions through different resources. For example, the fact that human represented participants have *Demand Contact* and that both human and non-human represented participants (the image of the product) are depicted with a frontal

perspective can create a sense of close interaction between the world of the advertisement and the viewer. Interactive meanings realised by language do not maintain the same 'tone' in terms of the degree of 'interactiveness' as what is visually realised. The verbal copy which is placed at the top part of the text, carries a neutral (neither highly interactive nor least interactive) stance without any particular use of formal honorific forms, which is written in Japanese, *Kissa suru nara* ('If you would like some tea,'). This verbal element does not form a complete sentence, that is, it is only a subordinate clause and the main clause is missing. This is where the cohesion between what the visual mode realises and what the verbal mode realise becomes relevant.

Now the focus will be move on to the issue of constructing 'textuality' through visual and verbal modes of semiosis. It is possible here to draw a semantic cohesion between what these two modes do in this text. The verbal element (copy), "*If you would like some tea*"functions as a subordinated clause to what is visually represented, which serves as the main clause, which would be something like "Try Suntory Oolong tea". In other words, the proposition which started off in the form of language finishes in the statement through the visual mode. This distribution of functional loads, the verbal element as a subordinate clause and the visual elements as 'the main clause', creates a reading path: from the top part of the text (realised through language) down to the bottom part of the text, realised in the form of visuals.

The distribution of visual and verbal elements provides another type of textual cohesion. The domain of Ideal consists of the human participants who are depicted to be standing in a field and in the domain of Real is the image of the product. The upper part of the text (Ideal) is an abstract realisation of 'Chineseness', which is expressed by the way in which the represented participants are shown, while the lower part of the text

(Real) realises this abstract notion of 'Chineseness' in the concrete form of Suntory Oolong Tea.

Figure 5-11 (a poster in a London underground station, discussed in section ***5.3.3.2***) is similar to the previous example in terms of the proportion of visual and verbal elements within the text. There is one sentence of copy, "*Looking for something better suited to your talents*?" and the name of the advertiser *The Evening Standard.* Language in this text has the Ideational metafunction of labelling which gives the reader/viewer a clue as to what this poster is about. There is no way of working out what this advertisement's subject matter is by just looking at the visual images, which appear in the form of a cartoon: there is a man who is carrying a bucket and a shovel, trailing behind an elephant wearing glasses and a tie.

This image comes to make sense with the help of verbal copy, "*Looking for something better suited to your talents?"*, that is, the visual image implies a work situation, where one is in a rut, pushed around by a demanding boss, doing the 'dirty' work. In this sense, verbal and visual elements in this text have a textual function of "mutual determination" (Noth, 1990:454), in which both semiotic modes work complementary to each other for the overall meaning making.

What the visual images represent in Figure 5-11 is the present situation, which is rather problematic, and needs to be sorted out and what the verbal copy does is to suggest one solution, which is to look for a prospective job in *The Evening Standard.* In other words, this advertisement forms a "problem solution discourse" (Hoey, 1983) which involves two different semiotic modes, that is, the visual mode is assigned to represent something problematic, not certain and language by contrast is given an authority to express a solidity, and reliability of the advertised commodity: *The Evening Standard* as

a good source of jobs.

Given that this is a poster on the underground, its viewership is unlimited number of people with heterogeneous kinds of background, that is, the text is expected to cover a broad range of viewers, as opposed to advertisements in a particular magazine. Being an advertisement on public transport, it has to be recognised quickly and easily, rather than anything that requires close attention.

With respect to the way in which visual and verbal modes realise the relationship (interactions) between the represented participants and the viewer, the use of a cartoon should be pointed out first. The visual mode in this advertisement takes the form of a cartoon as a [43]medium of visual representations, which can realise the interactive meaning that it could happen to anyone, as opposed to a specific case which would have been represented by the use of actual photographs of a man and his boss. Verbal elements have a high degree of interaction with the viewer in that the copy, "*Looking for something better suited to your talents?*" has a sense of a colloquialism, as though this 'voice' were addressing the viewer, inviting him/her into the discourse. This sense of informality and close interaction can also be realised by its choice of type face (font), which looks hand-written rather than neatly typed. The choice of this hand-writing font gives the discourse a personal 'touch' as opposed to a business-like, impersonal feel.

As for the value distribution in visual space in relation to the functional loads of visual and verbal modes, it is possible to divide it into two parts: the top and the bottom. The Ideal (Top) domain consists of the visual elements and the Real (Bottom) domain of the verbal caption. The problematic situation is visualised whereas for the representation of

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[43]The medium of visual representations include photographs, cartoons and other types of drawings.

a clue to possible breakthrough, language is used. This might suggest that problematic situation varies depending on an individual, therefore, the use of cartoon images that does not specify a case. The underlying message is that 'no matter how much individual cases vary, the solution is *one*; paging through *Evening Standard* job advertisements. The verbal copy therefore functions to fix the meaning and is presented as something 'down-to earth', 'realistic' and 'reliable' by its positioning in the domain of Real.

8.2.2 Functional loads in different textual composite types

8.2.2.1 Left/Right

This section will focus on the functional loads of visual and verbal semiotic modes and meaning conveyed through the way in which they are positioned in visual space. The first example, Figure 8-3, is a Japanese advertisement for a holiday in Orlando, Florida in the United States by a Japanese airline, *All Nippon Airways*. This advertisement is divided into two parts partly by the use of colours: the left part of the text has a yellow background and the right one a white background. Also these two sections of the text are marked by what is represented: the left part can be considered as visually realised and the right section consists mainly of verbal elements. In this respect, this advertisement has a compositional structure of the visual part (on the left) and the verbal part (on the right).

With respect to the representation of participants, there is a visualization of the major tourist sites in Orlando, such as the Kennedy Space Center, Sea World and Universal Studios[44]. The depiction of these visual participants of touristic spots create a

[44] The presentation of these 'items' forms what Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) call, 'Classificational process', where Orlando (the Superordinate) is represented to visually embody the Subordinates (individual items). Within this Classificational process shows narrative processes, which are realised by the represented participants. For example, in the visual 'item' of *Sea World* a young woman in a swim suit appears

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directionality of bottom to top (an upward directionality), which emanate from where Orlando is on the 'globe'. There is an image of an ANA aeroplane on the left bottom part of the text and this aeroplane has the visual directionality of left to right. (The plane is flying from Tokyo heading for Orlando.) The predominantly verbal section of the text (right part) also has visual elements, such as a map of North America; a company logo; an image that appears with the verbal caption *Enjoy Florida.*

Verbal elements in this advertisement are concentrated more on the right section of the text, where there is a description of holiday tours (the name and content of the tours) together with the cost. The verbal mode also summarises and indicates the advertised 'commodity' here, which is written half in English and half in Japanese katakana: *ANA's O-rando* ('ANA's Orlando'). In the left section, there is the main copy, which is vertically written in Japanese, *Chikyuu no asobi ga, zenbu aru.* ('All the fun on this planet is here in Orlando'). Apart from this main copy, there are verbal elements which appear in the names of the places. There is a juxtaposition in the directionality of language, that is, both vertical and horizontal type of writings can be found in the text.

The female represented participants, who are depicted together with the images of the places, all have eye-contact with the viewer (*Demand Contact*), which realises one part of interactive meanings between the world of the advertisement and the viewer. The visual elements (not only these human participants but also other visual participants) are presented with a relatively large size over the portion of the 'verbal part' of the text in the right section.

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to be holding a killer whale, while blowing whistle. In the 'item' of *Golf courses*, there is an image of a woman holding a golf club.

The use of colours with a low degree of saturation not only makes the visual elements 'stand out' but also provides the sense of 'lively' and 'energetic' interaction with the viewer. The choice of the 'medium' through which visual elements are realised is related to the Interpersonal meaning making. Visual elements are represented with a mixture of photographic images and cartoon-like images (objects). A different kind of interactive meaning would have been manifested if, for instance, the visual elements consist only of photographic images. The possible significance created by this juxtaposition of photographic/cartoon images might be to create a kind of 'dream world', which is separate from everyday life. This is a visual representation of a 'dream holiday', as opposed to 'everyday life' discourse.

The fact that some of the verbal items, such as place names in visual items and those on the map, are written in English suggests who the readers and prospective customers are. The use of English words instead of Japanese in verbal elements creates a particular type of readership, who have a command of English or at least who are interested in holidays abroad (to a Western country). The existence of the English language itself, helps the overall campaign, which encourages the viewer to experience 'things Western'. Also the prominent use of the noun-ending[45] in the verbal copy written in Japanese adds a sense of colloquialism and informality and allows close interaction with the viewer. The main copy *"ANA's Orlando"* is printed in red, which functions as an affinity marker, and draws the viewer's attention. In this way, not only visual elements but also verbal elements assume certain readers and can manifest 'close' and 'friendly' interactions.

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[45] This is a type of Japanese sentence, which ends in noun phrases, leaving be-verbs out. This type of sentences gives an abrupt and blunt impression, not being fully articulated, because they omit be-verbs. It also has an association of informality (colloquialism) as opposed to formality.

Given that the Japanese spatial semiotic (c.f. Figure 5-33) exists in this advertising text, it follows that the verbal part (the right section) is in the domain of the Given and the visual part (the left part) is in the domain of the New. With respect to the distribution of visual and verbal elements, specific and down-to-earth type of information (such as details of tours and price, how to contact the agency) functions as Given and more abstract and conceptual matters appear as New. Regardless of the type of semiotic mode, there is a consistency in the kind of meanings (or values), depending on which part of the visual space a given element appears. It is possible for the visual or verbal mode to realise different functions across different spatial domains.

For example, the map of North America appears in both parts of the text: in the left part, there is an image of the globe, which shows the map and in the right section, there is also a map of North America. However, these maps have different functional loads, the former is conceptual (which carries a notion of 'a holiday in Orlando') and the latter is factual in the sense that it serves as a source of information. The positioning of the latter type of map in the domain of Given supports the idea that it is something taken for granted : a map of North America. The other map in the domain of New realises a different meaning: it represents a place Orlando, which is, according to the commercial strategy, full of exciting surprises and fun for holiday makers to find out. This is not anything that is already known but 'new'; something to be explored by prospective tourists.

Given that the left part of the text ('the visual section') takes up a larger proportion of visual space than the verbally dominant section on the right, 'the visual section' forms the salient element in this text; salience in the sense that 'the visual section' is bigger in size. This is the point to which the viewer's attention is drawn *first*. This creates the

point of departure for the reading path of this text. The reading path of this text therefore flows from the visual section on the left to the verbal section on the right. In this case, attention is first drawn to the brightly coloured visual images on the left, and then may move to the verbal section (on the right), depending on the interest of the reader.

Figure 6-8 is a British example that has the Left/Right textual composition. This is an advertisement for a shampoo and conditioner called *Organics*, which appeared in the British women's magazine *Marie Claire*. This is a two-page spread advertisement: on the left hand page are visual images, which are accompanied with the main verbal copy, *"Turn up the volume"*; the other page consists of visual elements and verbal elements, the boundary of which is clearly shown by the change of colours. The verbal section has a white background, while the visual section has a background image of a blue sky and brown desert-looking field. For the purpose of my analysis, I divide the text into two parts and call them 'the visual section' (left half page plus two thirds of the right page which consists of visuals) and 'the verbal section' (one third of the right half of the text), although the 'visual section' includes a verbal element and the 'verbal section' includes visual elements.

In terms of the Ideational metafunction, the visual mode represents a female participant, together with a background setting in the visual section. In the verbal section, on the other hand, there are images of the advertised products (a bottle of *Organics* shampoo and *Organics* conditioner). The flow of hair of the female represented participant in the visual section creates upward directionalities.

With respect to the Ideational metafunctions realised by language, first of all, there is the main copy in the visual section. In the verbal section, there is sub copy, which reads:

Wouldn't you love it if your hair was soft and manageable - but full of extra body

and vitality too? (1)
That's what you can expect from the very first time you use Organics Shampoo and Conditioner.(2)
They both contain Glucasil, a natural nutrient which nourishes your hair's roots. (3)
For healthy-looking hair that's not just full of shine, but full of body and bounce as well.(4)
So try Organics Shampoo and Conditioner tonight. Then watch that volume hit maximum levels.(5)

ORGANICS --- Root Nourishing Shampoo and Conditioner

(images of products)
True beauty starts at the root.

The role of the verbal elements here is to describe what is being advertised (together with the name of the products) and what they do for hair. The copy forms a "problem-solution discourse", where the proposition starts with an implication of problematic state: *not* having 'soft' and manageable' hair, as is expressed in the sentence *"Wouldn't you love it if your hair was..."(1)*. This is followed by a suggestion for a solution: to use *Organics Shampoo and Conditioner* in *(2)*, which is given scientific backup *(3)*, together with how it works *(4)*, which ends up in the persuasion and encouragement *(5)*.

In this way, this problem-solution discourse is one of the resources that can be actualised by the verbal mode of semiosis, in other words, the verbal elements here are representing the products through the way in which they *can* solve the problem. The visual mode, by contrast, represents the product in the manner that it visualise the ideal state of hair; 'when the problem is solved thanks to the use of *Organics Shampoo and Conditioner'*. It depicts the hair in the ideal condition, 'healthy-looking hair'. What the products do to hair are therefore manifested with different focal points via the visual and verbal modes.

The female represented participant has eye contact with the viewer (*Demand Contact*),

which, together with her lips, makes her appear as if she was smiling at the viewer. She is photographed with a relatively close-up shot (*Personal Social Distance*), from a frontal angle, which gives the full degree of Involvement. The choice of interactive markers thus allows her to be represented as close and interactive to the viewer's stand point. The choice of the close-up shot is also related to its commercial strategy: in order to allow the viewer a close examination of the texture of an 'ideal' hair condition, the represented participant has to be literally 'closely' presented to the viewer.

Let me now focus on the Interpersonal metafunctions conveyed by the verbal elements. As is discussed earlier, the verbal copy forms a problem-solution discourse. Language conveys an informal, colloquial, and conversational stance, as though the advertiser were talking to the viewer and persuading them to use their products. There are contractive forms, as a marker of informal spoken discourse, such as *"Wouldn't you"*, and some of the expressions have an association with informal spoken discourse; *"That's what you can expect..."*, together with the use of the imperative mood; *"So try Organics Shampoo and Conditioner tonight"*. In this way, the verbal elements here take a stance which is highly interactive with the viewer, by the kind of linguistic marker of modality.

In terms of the visuality of language, the type of font used for the verbal copy is solid black, which, however, does not stand out as much as the verbal copy in Figure 8-3 in terms of the 'visual' impact in the text. It is the visual elements that are the most salient in this text, because of its size (the visuals take up the larger proportion of visual space in the text) and its use of multi-coloured images as opposed to the black and white combination in the verbal section.

With respect to the distribution of meanings in visual space in Figure 6-8, the left half of this text is in the domain of the Given and the right half is in the domain of the New,

according to the Western spatial semiotic. It is in the domain of New, where the greater amount of information is carried through visual and verbal modes. The human represented participant is New, which *visually* represents what the products *can* do (the 'ideal' condition of hair is represented). There is also a verbal accounts of what the products are and how they work. The New domain in this text is 'loaded' with more information, in other words, the density of information is higher in the domain of New than in the domain of Given. This difference of density of information as well as the salient use of colours determines the degree of salience. In the domain of New, both visual and verbal modes fulfil more functions than they do in the domain of Given.

Given that this is an advertisement in a British magazine, whose pages open from the left, the point of departure of the textual sequence starts in the left part of the text (Given), which runs across to the domain of New (on the right). Therefore, the textual reading begins with something abstract (that is represented by what the body copy says), which moves on to the domain, which is more densely filled with more specific information.

8.2.2.2 Top/Bottom

In this section, I will consider the role of visual and verbal semiotic modes in terms of textual integration, by drawing attention to advertising texts which realise Top/Bottom composition. The previously discussed example (Figure 5-11) has a distribution of visual (upper part of text) and verbal (lower part of text), which realises Top/Bottom composition. The boundary between the two spatial domains (Top/Bottom) is realised by the kind of semiotic mode in use. The upper part (the domain of Ideal) *visually* presents the problematic situation, to which the verbal copy located in the lower part of

text (in the domain of Real) suggests a clue to the possible solution: to buy and read the *Evening Standard* newspaper for job advertisements. Thus the boundary of spatial domain can be 'punctuated' by the use of different semiotic modes. Figure 5-11 is an example where each domain (Ideal/Real) is realised by a single semiotic mode: the Ideal domain is realised by the visual mode; the Real domain by the verbal mode.

There is another type of Top/Bottom composition, in which visual and verbal elements are distributed across the boundary of spatial domain. For example, where the Ideal domain consists not only of visual elements but also of verbal elements. In cases like this, the marking of a spatial boundary ('punctuation') cannot be made simply through the differentiation of semiotic mode but through other semiotic factors, such as the presence of lines, the change of colours.

Figure 6-1 is an example where the boundary within the text is created by the use of photographic images in contrast to the verbally dominant section. It has a distribution of visual elements in the domain of Ideal (Top) and verbal elements in the domain of Real (Bottom). The visual images of the family in the garden of *Happoen* represents an idealised situation, 'the perfect wedding', whereas the verbal elements at the bottom indicate how the 'ideal' situation may be brought about by the reader; in the details of price and available services.

In advertisements, one of the most important Ideational functions which are carried by visual and verbal modes is the representation of the commodity, that is to represent the product that is being advertised in the text'. Each semiotic mode has different ways of representing the commodity. For instance, by representing visual participants, which include both human participants (a bride, bride's sister and their father) and non-human participants (setting or background where the human participants are represented to be

standing), the visual mode presents a visualization of 'the ideal wedding ceremony' in the 'ideal setting'. Through the verbal mode, on the other hand, the commodity is realised in the form of a company logo (the lower right part of the text), and information about price and details of service provided can be said to be one realization of the commodity: what the company offers and for how much.

With respect to the Interpersonal metafunctions in Figure 6-1, the human participants are engaged in *Offer Contact*, not having any direct contact with the viewer, and they are represented to have a relatively large distance from the viewer. They are depicted as being 'not fully involved' with the viewer, which is realised by a slightly oblique angle. Besides, the low angle in relation to these participants creates *Representation power*. These meanings realised by these interactive markers, can be summed up as the visual manifestation of a world to which the viewer is not completely allowed full access. This leads to the commercial strategy which puts forward a sense of exclusiveness as opposed to 'commonness'. The advertiser's concept is for a wedding service at *Happoen* which is up market and for a restricted clientel. The colours in the setting (green plants with pink azalea flowers in a well-raked Japanese-style garden) also function as the markers of Interpersonal meaning: the green means 'freshness' and has a strong connection with 'nature' and 'nature' has a concept that has a positive association (Williamson, 1978). The likely message is, "being located in central Tokyo, we [*Happoen*] can offer you [the customers] this brilliant venue, surrounded by beautiful 'nature' for your wedding".

The verbal mode provides Interpersonal meanings via the use of font, the kind of modality language the written copy use. The main copy, which appears in 'the visual section', makes use of the Japanese calligraphic font, which can imply a hint of formality and solemnity in the wedding ceremony. The rest of the verbal elements (which appear

as copy in the Real domain of the text) use a neutral to formal type of font. The copy is printed in a solid black font as opposed to the kind of font which is like hand-writing, which also carries the appropriate ambience for a 'formal' ceremony instead of an informal 'gathering'.

In this way, both visual and verbal modes realise what *Happoen* can offer to their customers in different ways. The visual mode realises what the company offers in the form of visualisation of 'what it is going to be like when Happoen is chosen as the venue for a wedding ceremony', in other words, the atmosphere or ambience which cannot be represented in language. The verbal mode actually presents the detailed contents of services which are available at *Happoen*, together with the details of the cost, which cannot be represented through the visual mode. The type of information carried by visual images (the visual information of an 'ideal wedding') appears in the domain of Ideal and the verbal mode conveys more down-to-earth information (as opposed to the visual representation of 'ideal') and it is located in the domain of Real.

The reading paths in this example is related to what is taken as salience. Because of the degree of impact, this text is most likely to be read from 'the visual section' (represented by photographic images) to the verbal section on the bottom. The visual elements provide the viewer with an ideal 'picture' of a wedding ceremony (which has an 'affinity' function), which is followed by more down-to-earth type of information, such as the cost and kinds of services which are offered at *Happoen*. The reading path from top to bottom creates integration by drawing the reader from the 'ideal' to the 'real', bringing the reader literally 'down to earth'.

Figure 8-4 is another example of an advertisement which is a Top/Bottom composite text. This is a British advertisement for a floor covering called *Flotex*, taken from *Marie*

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Claire magazine. The text can be divided mainly into two parts: the upper two thirds, which consists predominantly of the visuals and the lower one third of text, where the verbal elements are. The 'visual part of the text shows two scenes: the upper part with the word *"Fat"*, where there is an image of a frying pan falling on to the floor, leaving cooked (greasy-looking) vegetables scattered all over the surface; and the lower part that shows a clean floor with the word *"Free"*.

Both visual and verbal modes serve Ideational functions by representing the advertised commodity, in different ways: visually and verbally. The visual mode enables the viewer to *see* what the commodity (floor covering) is like by presenting its image in the practical environment (the kitchen). Apart from this presentation of the 'physical appearance' of the commodity, the visual mode in this example realises the commodity *in process*. The visual elements in this text manifest a 'temporal-sequential' process, by showing two different states of the kitchen floor. The sequentiality, from a messy floor (with greasy vegetables all over it) to the floor in clean state, creates a vectorial process of top to bottom, in other words, 'before ---> after'. This also forms a problem-solution discourse, in that the visual elements depict a process in which a messy looking kitchen floor (the problem) is transformed into a clean surface (the problem solved). Verbal elements appear in the form of single words, such as *"Fat"* and *"Free"*, which is "anchoring", in Barthes' (1967) sense, what is visually ongoing. The two different states of the floor (which is visually realised) is verbally "anchored" in these words.

The verbal elements which take the lower part of the text also represent the advertised product in the form of the copy:

> *Dont's worry, with Flotex even potentially disastrous spills like hot fat needn't be a recipe for disaster. Its unique surface ensures that it will clean up to look as good as new time after time. It's also completely waterproof, easy to clean, and*

it backed by a full 10 year wear guarantee. So next time you're the butter fingers with the saute pan, make sure it's Flotex. To receive your own copy of the 1997 Flotex Home Solutions brochure, simply fill in the coupon or telephone ***01773 740607.***

This is a verbal realization of 'problem-solution discourse. The copy begins in response to the hypothetical problematic situation, where 'disastrous spills' cause a messy kitchen floor: *"Don't worry, with Flotex even potentially disastrous spills like hot fat needn't be a recipe for disaster"*. After suggesting the use of *Flotex* as a means of problem solution, it goes on to explain more detailed advantages that the product offers consumers: *"Its unique surface.....and it is backed by a full 10 years wear guarantee"*, which leads to the explicit persuasion, *"So next time you're.....make sure it's Flotex"*. Finally, the copy suggests the viewer 'take action' by filling in the coupon (which is printed below the copy) to get further information about the flooring: *To receive your own copy of the 1997.....simply fill in the coupon or telephone* ***01773 740607.***

These verbal representations of *Flotex,* which serves part of the Ideational metafunctions, are related to the Interpersonal metafunctions. For example, the copy begins as though the advertiser was speaking to the viewer, who is in a problematic situation, *"Don't worry..."*. The tone of the copy is informal and conversational, which is indicated partly by the use of the contractions (such as *"don't"* and *"needn't"*) and partly by the use of imperative forms (*"Don't worry"; "make sure it's Flotex"; "simply fill in the coupon..."*). The verbal mode functions as 'action promoter' in that it provides the actual coupon for those who are interested to fill in. In other words, the verbal elements in this example have a type of interaction with the viewer, where they not only provide information about the products but also encourage the viewer to 'take action' to get further information.

With respect to Interpersonal meanings realised by the visual mode, by presenting the image of the product as close to the viewer, with *Personal Social Distance*, the advertiser tries to allow the viewer to examine the commodity more closely. In this respect, the way in which the visual mode realises the commodity creates the Interpersonal meaning; the viewer is encouraged to scrutinise the advertised commodity. Together with the Interpersonal meaning created by verbal elements, which is highly interactive, the visual also locates the viewer in a position of intimacy.

So far I have discussed the role of the visual and verbal modes in the *Flotex* advertisement, now I will consider the positioning of these functional units in the visual space. The visual elements make up the upper part of the text and the verbal elements the bottom part of the text; they are in the domain of Ideal and Real, respectively. The top part of the text is where the visual mode manifests the 'ideal' process of problem-solution. The bottom part, on the other hand, is used for detailed descriptions as well as practical information, such as the coupon and telephone number.

The upper part of the text forms the salient point in this advertisement, composed of two visual images, because of its size, it takes up more than two-thirds of the entire visual space. Therefore this text can be read from this visual section, which is led by verbal 'reinforcement', which then results in (if the suggestion is accepted) the actual action of filling in the form and posting it to the company for further information about the advertised product. That is, this text potentially creates a reading dynamic of top to bottom. Depending on the viewer's interest, or the degree of involvement (for example, the viewer who is in need of new flooring might be more involved in the discourse of this advertisement), the reading path might stop at the first stage (the visual part) or reach the final stage (where the viewer takes action to fill in the coupon and sends it off).

8.2.2.3 Centre/Margins

In this section, I will discuss the integration of visual and verbal modes, with reference to the advertising texts with a textual composition of Centre/Margins. Figure 5-30 is a Japanese advertisement for tins of fruit dessert. What is represented by the visual mode includes visual images of the products (a gift box of fruit dessert), photographic images of serving suggestions, cartoon characters and two human represented participants (whose heads are photographic images and the rest of the bodies are shown in the cartoon images).

In terms of process types these visual participants realise, first of all, the image of the product and images of serving suggestions form a Classificational process in that the former serves as the hyperordinate to which the latter elements are subordinated. That is, several suggestions for the use of fruit dessert (the subordinates) are all derived from the product (the superordinate). The cartoon characters inside the central circle are individually engaged in various processes. The human participants who are positioned at the bottom part of the text have eye contact (*Demand Contact*) with the viewer.

The verbal mode carries the body copy (on the top part of the text); the name of the product (above the image of the gift box in the inner circle); the price (below the product); verbal instructions to the cartoon images in the outer circle; English copy *"Summer Gift"*; the contact number of customer services and the sub copy (at the very bottom of the text). The Ideational metafunction these verbal elements realise is the representation of the product (the name and price of the product); specific information about the campaign (such as a contact number for customer information); describing the cartoon images. The scriptorial directionality is consistent in a whole text in the sense that only the horizontal way of writing is used, which flows from left to right.

The juxtaposition of cartoon and photographic images in the visual elements forms one aspect of interpersonal meaning. Visual images for the serving suggestions have to be realised through photographic images because they have to present what the product looks like when it is served. These photographic images of desserts serve the interpersonal function of 'suggestion', which can be considered as an 'image act': the message is 'Here are some suggestions. Why don't you try it yourself?' The cartoon images give rise to the sense of being general as opposed to being selective or specific. This works as a commercial strategy in the sense that the use of cartoons suggests that the message is not exclusive but open to anyone (c.f the discussion of Figure 5-11).

The verbal mode also fulfils the Interpersonal metafunctions. For example, the use of a particular font in the main copy is what is called "cute style" (Skov and Moeran 1995), which has an association with a colloquial use and young female users. The verbal instructions in the outer circle also make use of a hand writing-like font instead of typed letters. The choice of this particular font gives verbal elements a conversational and informal feel.

Besides, the use of English copy ("*Summer Gift*") in this advertisement contributes to the construction of interpersonal meanings. For example, the advertiser who wrote the English copy is aware of a particular type of readership who are at least exposed to English language or have a command of English. This leads to the age and class specificity of what this advertisement is aiming at; the expected readership is likely to be from younger generations who are more exposed to Western cultures than older generations and also likely to be those who belong to social groups with a higher education background.

Regarding the distribution of meanings in the composition of Centre and Margins,

what constitutes the domain of Centre is the nucleus of information and this is realised through both the visual and verbal modes. This spatial domain realises, most significantly, the image of the product (together with the price), and suggestions for the practical use of the products, which are jointly managed by visual and verbal modes. What is realised in the domain of Margins is the main copy and some other 'fringe', less significant information (such as the sub copy, the contact telephone number of customer services). They can be regarded as secondary information after what is conveyed in the Centre domain ('nucleus' information).

This spatial distribution of meaning makes the domain of Centre the salient point, and this domain of Centre can further be divided into subcategories of the Centre' and the Margins'. The Centre' is realised by an image of the product (a gift box) in the inner circle and the Margins' appears in the form of serving suggestions and cartoon images in the outer circle. The elements of Margins are characterised by its equal status in relation to the Centre. The positioning of these Margin elements does not suggest any specific reading path among the elements, they all have the equal status in relation to the Centre'.

Given that the elements in the Margins' (fruit dessert) are all made from the element in the Centre' (the product), it follows that the relation between the Centre' and the Margins' creates outward vectors: from the element in the inner circle, the ones in the outer circle are created. This creates the reading path of *inner to outer*. This flow of reading path can be a manifestation of conceptual sequence, where something most salient and important is placed spatially as *inner most*, from which the less prioritised 'byproducts' are created, which are positioned in the *outer* space.

This type of reading path, which has a point of departure in the inner most spatial

domain, which is followed by the 'subordinates' realised in the domain of Margins, can be taken as one example of the materialisation of an abstract ontology. Given that the representation of the Centrality and Marginality is more prominent in Japanese visual representations than in British ones, there is room to explore the meaning making of Centre/Margins in the light of the social and cultural implications of Japanese value systems.

8.3 FUNCTIONAL LOADS OF THE VISUAL AND THE VERBAL MODES IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE

The previous section looked at the role of visual and verbal semiotic modes and the way in which these two modal functions are integrated in the entire meaning making of advertising texts through three composite types (Left/Right; Top/Bottom; Centre/Margins). As examples show, each semiotic mode has *functional loads*, and particular ways of realising various meanings. The choice or distribution of semiotic modes, depending on what kind of meaning is to be realised, manifests potential 'capacity' of a given semiotic mode. Concepts or meanings, which appear to be interchangeable between modes, cannot completely convey identical values, in other words, each semiotic mode provides certain functions, making use of specific resources.

In this section, given that the visual and verbal modes contribute to the entire semiosis of a given text, I proceed with my analysis based on an assumption that the way in which these semiotic modes integrate the text can be also culturally specific, different semiotic systems give rise to different ways of realising multi-modal functions and integration between them. I will therefore draw attention to the way in which multi-modality works

across different cultures.

I wish to examine cultural specificness in the use of different semiotic modes, which is based on the assumption that a different semiotic system provides a different type of semiosis, where each semiotic mode is interrelated to each other in a different way. For example, the Japanese and English languages realise the Interpersonal metafunctions, making use of different linguistic devices which are available within each linguistic system. Likewise, Japanese and British visual representations are subject to the resources of Japanese and British visual semiotic systems. I will take up three sets of Japanese and British advertising texts, in order to explore cultural specificness in the process of meaning making and how each cultural semiotic contributes to the making of *integration.*

In order to concentrate solely on the difference in semiosis and integration of multi-modality in Japanese and British semiotic environments, I am going to deal with advertisements for a similar type of product (subject-matter), which are taken from textual sources with parallel readerships in Japan and Britain. They include: advertisements for a diamond engagement ring (Figures 6-9 and 6-10) in section ***8.3.1.1***; ready-made cup soup (Figures 8-6 and 8-7) in section ***8.3.1.2***; pain-killing tablets (Figures 8-8 and 8-9). What I am going to focus on is how the visual and verbal modes carry semiotic functions in Japanese and British advertisements, and how the two different texts from different semiotic environments realise textual cohesion using the two semiotic modes.

8.3.1 Textual analysis

8.3.1.1 De Beers diamond ring advertisement

Figures 6-9 and 6-10 are a Japanese and a British campaign respectively, by the diamond

company *De Beers*. There is one human represented participant in each case: a young woman, who is wearing an engagement ring on her finger. A woman in Figure 6-9 appears to be a Japanese model and a Western model is used in the British example (Figure 6-10). In Figure 6-9, there is an image of a diamond engagement ring which is placed above the main caption, *"Diamond wa eien no kagayaki"* ('the radiance of a diamond lasts forever'), while in Figure 6-10, there is an image of a diamond stone below the image of a woman.

The vectors created by the eye line of each woman is contrastive: the Japanese model is represented to be looking down, which creates a diagonal vector from top to bottom. From the fingers of her clasped hands, there are two vectorial lines: one that diagonally goes up towards the right, and other that creates leftward vectors. In Figure 6-10, the woman's eye line is set at the eye-level of the viewer, with whom she has eye contact (*Demand Contact*). She is posing as though she is showing her engagement ring to the viewer and her left hand which is put in front of her face produces vectors with multiple directionality; her thumb creates an upward line, whereas her index finger is directed towards the left and other fingers create diagonal lines which go downwards and to the left. Figure 8-5 is an abstract representation of vectors emanated from these female models. It may be said that vectors emanated from the Japanese model are more regularly formulated than that in the British example, where the vectors are pointed in various directions. This gives the Japanese text a sense of stability and regularity and the British text a more vibrant and spontaneous ambience.

With respect to verbal elements, both texts indicate the name of the company *"De Beers"* in English, together with the main copy, *"A diamond is forever"*, which fulfils a labelling function. Verbal elements in the Japanese example can be divided into three

types: the main copy; practical information about the commodity (which is placed below the images of diamonds in three different size); and sub-copy above the image of an engagement ring. While the information about the commodity has a practical purpose, the sub-copy serves as a mood enhancer, which reads:

> *(1)You deserve an engagement ring with an ample size of diamond that lasts for the rest of your life.*
> *(2)That's true. Even when your big day is finished, your ring will never cease to stop glowing, like the oath you made to each other. You would surely like to wear it for a long time. We would recommend you choose a high-quality engagement ring with an ample size of diamond.* [my translation]

The first section *(1)* has a touch of 'feminine voice' (which cannot be reproduced in the English translation), as though the represented participant was addressing the viewer as 'one of us' who is getting engaged. The second part of copy *(2)* takes on a tone of professionalism, in the sense that it 'suggests' and 'recommends' the viewer to follow 'sensible' ways of choosing the 'right' kind of engagement ring. In this respect, verbal elements here are conversational and interactive, which consist of plural 'voices'.

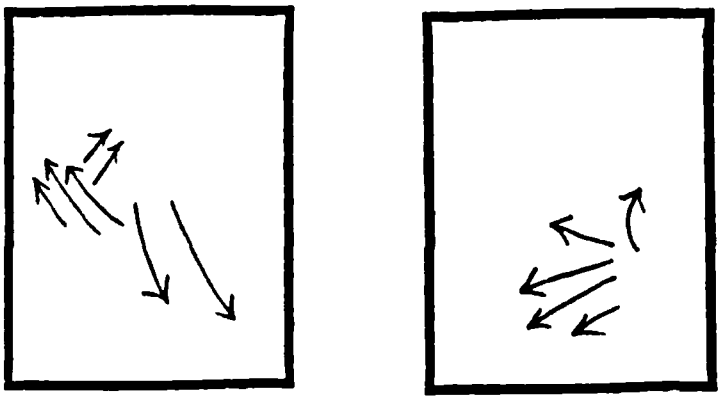

Figure 8-5 **Japanese (Figure 6-9)** **British (Figure 6-10)**

The copy which mentions practical information is written in a more formal style, using honorific expressions. It includes a description of the size of diamonds, a brief

history of the company (established in 1888), and the underlined part offers a free brochure, together with a telephone number. This part of the verbal elements are down-to-earth and factual, and function as action-promoter (c.f. analysis of Figure 8-4), in the sense that they encourage the viewer to take some action in relation to the commodity. In this way, the verbal mode in Figure 6-9 carries interactive functions of talking to the viewer; giving advice to the viewer; offering free and further information to the viewer.

In the case of the British version, verbal elements are divided into two sections: one on the top part of the text, which is printed in a kind of ornamental font as is used for wedding invitations:

> *Getting engaged means making a huge decision.*
> *You live with it for the rest of your life.*
> *So I decided on the solitaire.*

This corresponds to the sub-copy in the Japanese text, in terms of content, which describes a general idea around marriage (such as engagement as a big decision). Starting off with a general statement, *Getting married means making a huge decision. You live with it for the rest of your life* leads to the specific case of Jo Lawrence, *So I decided on the solitaire*, which is continued in the section below the image of woman:

> *The Jo Lawrence Diamond.*
> *A diamond solitaires engagement ring, bought for just over a month's salary by Richard Poole. Like all diamonds, it is four times harder than sapphire, the next hardest gemstone. Jo Lawrence also found it at least four times more exciting than anything else she could imagine living with (except for Richard). For a brochure on solitaries from £695, phone 0115 970 8388. To help choose your diamond from 0.20 carat here are some examples of actual size.*

An image of a diamond, which is placed below the image of woman, is verbally labelled as *The Jo Lawrence Diamond.* There is a consistent tone of formality in the use of language. For example, there are non-finite (subordinate) clauses woven into the sentences, such as "bought for just over a month's salary...", and "anything else she could

imagine living with". Also there is no use of contractions, which makes a sentence less formal. The way in which this text offers further information to the viewer is different from the Japanese example in that the former is more instructive (one-way narrative, or monologic as opposed to dialogic) rather than interactive, which is the case with the latter. In other words, the wording in Figure 6-10 is factual and reduced to the minimum point, "For a brochure....phone...", instead of using an expression like "We will give you a brochure, please give us a call", which has more personal involvement with the viewer.

With respect to Interpersonal meanings created through the verbal mode in these two advertisements, the Japanese text is more interactive and dialogic than the British one, which keeps a certain distance from the viewer. Besides, citing one specific case of 'Jo Lawrence' (Figure 6-10), as opposed to leaving it anonymous (Figure 6-9) might indicate the value of individualism, which is thought more highly of in British culture than in Japanese culture. The specific description of one particular person, who has obtained a De Beers diamond ring, attempts to give the photographed woman a specific identity. In this respect, it might also be said that the verbal copy in the British text reduces the distance between the participant and the viewer, with an underlying message, "You could be as happy as satisfied as Jo Lawrence, if you opt for a De Beers ring".

The next question is how these verbal realizations of interpersonal meanings are related to that of visual representations? If we grant that the Japanese example is more *verbally* interactive than the British example, is the visual mode consistent in carrying a similar stance in each text? In terms of the interactive marker Contact, the Japanese model has *Offer Contact*, whereas the British model is engaged in direct contact with the viewer (*Demand Contact*). The facial expression is more dynamic in the case of British example, where the model is photographed to be smiling in a more overt manner.

The Japanese model, by contrast, has a more static facial expression, although she is also smiling. The positioning of the model's hand also contributes to interactive functions, that is, the British model is holding her hand up so that she can show her newly acquired ring to the viewer, whereas the Japanese model crosses her hands in front of her face, leaving the ring more conspicuous. Although both women are represented with similar *Social Distance* (between *Personal* and *Intimate*), the British model is shown with more of her body (down to her upper chest, with a clear neck line) than the Japanese model who is exposed with only her head and hands against a dark background.

As far as visual representations are concerned the British participant has closer interaction with the viewer than the Japanese one. In this way, how each semiotic mode is responsible for interpersonal meanings in Figure 6-9 and 6-10 exemplifies the case, where what is visualised does not have the same meaning as what is verbally realised. And the way in which the visual and verbal modes manifest certain functions is related to the value systems of each culture. That is, what is accepted in a given culture, such as the case of the Japanese model posing in a passive posture, instead of in a more forward and assertive manner and the emphasis of individualism in the socially institutionalised event like engagement, which is seen in the British example. This can be expressed differently either through the visual or the verbal mode.

In terms of textual cohesion between visual and verbal elements there are also differences between the two examples, apart from the fact that the visual element (an image of a woman) serves as the most salient element in both texts. For example, while there is no frame in the Japanese example, where both visual and verbal elements share the same spatial ground, the British one is divided into three spatial sections: the top section with the copy; the middle section with an image of woman; the bottom section

with more verbal copy together with images of diamonds. Regarding the positioning of verbal elements in relation to visual images, one section of the verbal copy in the Japanese advertisement is backgrounded or pushed away by the image of diamond ring. This can indicate the premier status of the visual image over the verbal elements in terms of spatial distribution in Figure 6-9.

Unlike the Japanese example, Figure 6-10 has a textual composition that allows the verbal element to secure its own space (the top section), which might imply a particular status of verbal elements (that is verbal elements have their own territory), from those in the Japanese counterpart. The British campaign is more verbally dependent than the Japanese one, the visual mode in Figure 6-9 might have the heavier weight of functional load than that in Figure 6-10. (This leads to the question of whether a different status is distributed to each semiotic mode in Japanese and British semiotic systems. For example, Japanese visual representations are more dependent on meaning making through the visual mode than their British counterparts are).

Both texts have verbal elements that have to do with down-to-earth or practical information on the lower part of texts, although in the case of the Japanese advertisement, spatial distribution for the copy is smaller than in the British one. The inverted position of images of diamond stones between these two texts can be explained in terms of cultural specificness in visual directionality (c.f. section **5.3**). In Japanese visual semiotic, I suggest the visual domain of bottom left has a meaning of 'Real-New', which is something (specific and practical) to be found out or that requires attention. In Figure 6-10, by contrast, the image of diamond stones are placed on the domain of 'Real-New', according to Western visual semiotic. The image of diamonds is 'New' in the sense that it carries information to be noted, as the copy says, *"To help choose your diamond from*

0.20 carat here are some examples of actual size". Here the function of representing the size of diamonds is exclusively realised through the visual mode because the verbal description of the size of a diamond (using the unit 'carat') does not fulfil its function as efficiently as the visual does.

From what has been discussed so far, comparison between Japanese and British advertisements for the same campaign proves the point that what is visually realised and what is verbally realised do not necessarily share a common function in terms of meaning making. In the Japanese example, the human participant, who is visually distanced from the viewer, is juxtaposed with verbal elements, which are more interactive than those in the British text, where the female model is depicted with a higher degree of interaction with the viewer than the Japanese text. The analysis of these two advertisements across cultures makes it clear that it is possible for each semiotic mode to carry different kinds of 'voices', or in other words, different semiotic functions, which are juxtaposed within one single text.

Finally I will consider the textual coherence via reading paths in each text. The most likely reading path in Figure 6-9 forms a circular line, in that the reading path starts in the most salient part (the woman's finger with an engagement ring), which is led by the vectorial line (by her left arm) to the lower right part of the text, where there is a magnified image of a diamond ring, together with the verbal copy and the indication of the name of the company. Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) argue, regarding this reading path of upper left to lower right:

> When we read, the eye moves from the upper left corner of the page to the lower right corner, and the upper left-lower right diagonal is indeed an extremely important dimension in much painting, as well as in advertising lay-out (44).

The reading path then moves on to the bottom left part of the text, which provides

detailed and down-to-earth information about the commodity. In other words, the flow of the reading path starts with the most salient visual elements, then moves on to the next most salient visual plus verbal elements, then to the least salient visual and verbal elements, which can be connected back to the first stage led by the vector that the woman's right hand creates.

In the case of the British example (Figure 6-10), the formation of reading path is more complicated than the Japanese example in that it provides more options for reading the text. The starting point of the reading path is, like Figure 6-9, the left hand of the depicted woman, with a diamond engagement ring, which forms the most salient point. Here there a two possibilities: either the reading path goes up to the top section or goes down to the lower section of the text. Three of her fingers are pointing downward, which can lead the flow of the reading path towards the lower part of the text, which consists of visual and verbal elements. Her thumb, by contrast, which points upwards, can create the opposite flow of reading path; to the upper section where there is the main verbal copy. However, the downward vector is the more prominent as suggested by her fingers. Given that, the most plausible reading path (which starts in the visual section in the middle band of the text) moves down to the lower section, which goes back to the most salient section and from there moves up to the verbal elements in the top section. In this way, the reading path of the British example forms vertical lines (which move up and down) while the Japanese one creates a circular movement of reading path. In other words, the reading path of the former provides the text with an intermittent meaning and that of the latter creates a continual dynamic in the text.

8.3.1.2 Cup soup advertisements

The second set of examples is an advertisement for instant cup soup (Figure 8-6 and 8-7). The Japanese example (Figure 8-6), by a Japanese company *Nichirei* is taken from the Japanese magazine *More* and the British one (Figure 8-7), by a British company, *Batchelor's* from *Marie Claire.* They are from magazines with a similar readership (young, middle-class females), yet the way in which the visual and verbal modes are used is considerably different.

First of all, the two examples have different types of represented participants: in Figure 8-6, there is a photograph of a Japanese girl dressed in a school uniform, behind whom is another woman (presumably her mother) who is cooking, her back turned to the viewer, and in Figure 8-7, a woman in a dark-coloured outfit is photographed curled up on a sofa. Figure 8-6 has everyday life circumstances, that is, two of the human participants are situated in a kitchen, where there is a kitchen unit with sink, together with other utensils, while in Figure 8-7, the model is located in a less realised location, she is sitting on a yellow sofa in a room with a reddish orange wall with a wooden pattern.

The visual mode in each text represents a different kind of 'domesticity', that is, the type of domesticity depicted in the Japanese text is fully contextualised, high in the modality of everyday life reality. In this case, the kitchen realises a particular domestic scene, where women are expected to be engaged in household chores. In the case of the British advertisement, by contrast, a sense of domesticity is represented by the living room, where a woman can sit down on the sofa and relax.

Another role of the visual mode here is to represent the advertised commodity: instant cup soup in this case. In Figure 8-6, visual images of the product are placed in the middle of the page, overlapping the picture of the girl, beside which is a column of copy. Figure

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

8-7, on the other hand, has its product image located on the top of the page, surrounded with a yellow lining. Neither of the images completely represents naturalistic everyday life, because, for instance, a packet of soup cannot be floating in mid-air as in Figure 8-7.

The functions that the verbal mode conveys in each text are also different. The most salient verbal element in Figure 8-6 can be a speech bubble emanating from the girl, which says *"Kondo no susume wa kore"* ('I would recommend this now'). Next to the images of boxes of instant soup lies a section where the copy printed in a large-sized black font reads, *"Shizen no oishisa o otegaruni. Yuuki yasai no potaju suupu ga dekimashita"*. ('You can appreciate the natural flavour of fresh vegetables. We have made a soup out of organic vegetables'.) The rest of the copy, printed in a smaller font, explains the process of manufacture and how to prepare it, along with a website address for the customer to contact.

In the British example, there is the main copy which takes the middle part of text, *"So creamy, you'll lap it up"*, printed in white letters, with a handwriting font rather than print. Sub-copy in the same font is located on the bottom part of the page, which introduces the varieties of soup which are available, *"Available in: Lentil, Coriander & Cumin; Broccoli & Cauliflower; Rich Woodland Mushroom; Spinach & Nutmeg and Chicken & Tarragon"*.

Then how do these verbal elements realise interpersonal functions together with the above-mentioned visual elements? First of all, the Japanese girl in Figure 8-6 can be said to be highly interactive both visually and verbally. She is represented as though she was talking to the viewer and because of the speech bubble. Visually, she has direct eye contact with the viewer (*Demand Contact*) and also is pointing a finger straight towards the viewer, which gives the sense of assertive and straightforwardness. Her look sets the

viewer in the position of 'being looked down on', she is represented with *Representation power*, in terms of the angle from which she is photographed.

In the case of Figure 8-7, on the other hand, the human participant is not given any voice unlike the Japanese example. In fact, she is metaphorically represented as a cat, which is realised through both visual and verbal modes. The visual mode realises, for example, things that have a strong association with cats, such as her make-up (an emphasis of cat-like eye and eye lines) and her posture (playing with a ball of wool, curled up on a sofa). The expression to "*lap up*" in the main copy and a play on words ("*purrfectly* delicious soup") function as verbal clues. The female model has *Demand Contact* in that she engages in eye contact with the viewer, having a subtle smile on her face. She is represented as having *Personal Social Distance* and she is taken from a high angle, which gives an interactive meaning of *Viewer power*, the viewer is positioned to look down on the represented participant.

With respect to the Interpersonal metafunctions realised by the visual and verbal modes, in this way, the Japanese text manifests a more direct (as is seen in the image act by the girl, taken from a low angle with a frontal prospect) and specific (in the sense that the text opens up a mutual interaction between the company and the consumers, by citing a website address, which is another example of language as action promoter) interactive meanings than the British example, where the visual mode allows the represented participant to interactive with the viewer in a more subtle way (as is implied in the woman's facial expression and static posture) and verbal elements are less dialogic without any specific information that can act as a bridge between the advertiser and the viewer or prospective consumer.

Textual cohesion between visual and verbal elements can be another marker that

distinguishes differences between Japanese and British semiosis in these advertising texts. In the Japanese example, it seems that verbal elements are embedded in the visual context, which encapsulates other visual elements (the images of the product). Although the copy section beside the images of the product functions as one of the salient points in the sense that it carries specific information, this text can be said to be heavily visually dependent in terms of meaning making.

In the case of the British example, the positioning of the product images are different from the Japanese example: it is placed on the top part of the page, which, together with the main copy makes the salient point in the text. Here the verbal elements are not subordinated to the visual context, on the contrary, they create a coherence between two semiotic modes in the way that verbal expressions like *"lap up"* and *"purrfectly"* helps the visual elements to be fully appreciated.

The functional loads of the verbal mode in Figure 8-7 are, therefore, greater than those in Figure 8-6, in the sense that verbal elements make the most salient part of the text, in which visual images of the product are 'embedded' (or subordinated to). When it comes to the amount of information, however, the verbal mode in the Japanese advertisement carries more than the British one, which gives the Japanese text an overall position as a 'factual' orientated campaign, as opposed to an 'atmospheric', 'surreal' and 'abstract' orientation provided in the British advertisement.

Now I will focus on how the reading paths of these two advertising texts form textuality. In the case of Figure 8-6, the vertical band in the central pat of the text, which includes the image of the product and the female participants, is the most salient part and where the reading path has its point of departure. From this point, two verbal elements lead out, one of which is a speech bubble on the top left and the other of which is another

verbal 'segment' placed next to the images of the products. The size of the speech bubble is larger than the product image and this makes the former more salient than the latter. The most likely reading path, therefore, moves up to the top left and, via the most salient point, it leads to the verbal section in the white background. In this respect, it may be said that this text has the visual as the most salient point as visual, from which the subordinate verbal elements radiate.

Figure 8-7, on the other hand, creates a different type of reading path in that the most salient point (with the image of products) appears at the top part of the section, where the reading path has its starting point. This is followed by the verbal copy, which is positioned below the visual images and this leads down to the visual section (where there is an image of a woman resting on a sofa). The flow of the reading path then ends in the bottom part of the text, which consists of verbal elements. Compared to the reading path of the Japanese example, Figure 8-7 forms its reading path with a straight vertical dynamic of top to bottom.

8.3.1.3 Pain-killer advertisements

As the final set of examples, I will use Japanese (Figure 8-8) and British (Figure 8-9) advertisements for pain relief, which are taken from the magazines *More* and *Marie Claire* respectively. To begin with, I will draw attention to what and who the represented participants are in each text. In the Japanese advertisement, as verbal elements, there is the main copy, which is written vertically, on the right and also on the left, which is accompanied with an image of the product, a box of tablets. There is a company logo on the top left hand corner, which consists of language and visual images, which takes the shape of an eagle. The middle of the text consists of a sequence of cartoon pictures,

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

which are juxtaposed with verbal instructions.

In the case of Figure 8-8, on the other hand, there are two represented participants in the visual mode: an image of a woman printed in black and white and an image of a box of tablets with PARAMOL, placed in the lower right corner. There is a band at the bottom of the text, where the copy is located. On the upper right part of the text is another copy, which describes the effect of the medicine ("*Powerful Pain Relief*"), which is followed by several symptoms for which the product claims to be effective.

In this way, each text opts for different resources to realise an advertising text for pain relief by using different modes in different ways. My concern is how does each example make use of the different semiotic modes? First of all, Figure 8-8 and 8-9 use a different resource for representing the problematic situation of 'being in pain'. Among various resources of the visual mode, Figure 8-8 uses cartoon images to represent the problematic situation, in the form of a woman who is suffering from a headache. In Figure 8-9, by contrast, the choice of resource of visual mode is a black and white photograph, with an image of woman who is exercising, grimacing.

Thus two advertisements describe a woman suffering from a headache using very different visual resources: cartoon and photograph. It seems to me that there is a cultural implication behind the choice of medium through which visual elements are realised. The possible implication is that the use of a cartoon can generalise the matter as something that could happen to anyone, whereas representation of a woman in a photograph is more specific and in one sense closer to everyday reality. The choice of resources for visual representation might also be related to what is valued in a given culture: the tendency of thinking highly of group consciousness in Japanese culture is related to the preference of the general depiction of women using cartoon form, which

is manifested in the Japanese example, and the photographic representation, on the other hand, implies the values of individualism in British culture[46] (c.f. the analysis of Figure 6-10).

The role of cartoon images in Figure 8-8 is to visualise a 'problem-solution discourse': from the moment a woman has a headache to when the pain disappears, following three stages 1, 2 and 3, as is indicated beside the verbal instructions. The instructions back each stage up by giving a scientific explanation, which uses the technical terms of medicine. Below the instructions is an abstract representation of a brain (printed in white with broken lines) and pain (in the form of red figure). The main copy to the right of these figures reads *"Naze double-block wa kikunokana no zu"* ('The formula that shows why *Double-Block* works this well') *Double-Block*, the name of the product, means that the medicine blocks two causes of pain at the same time.

Regarding the role of the photographed woman in Figure 8-9, the woman does not, unlike the cartoon character in Figure 8-8, represent any 'curing process', instead she is represented to be exercising in a place like a gym. Her facial expression is not very clear (she could look like she is putting up with the pain) and the eye contact with the viewer is absent (*Offer Contact*) and the upper part of her body shows that she is wearing a training suit. She is represented with a medium shot, which gives a relatively close interactive meaning of *Social Distance*. The list of symptoms that appears in red letters, above the shoulder of the woman works figuratively as 'pain' that is causing her a trouble, against which she is 'fighting'.

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[46]In British (Western more broadly) advertisements, cartoon images are mostly seen as a medium for children or youth and not for adults, but this is not the case in Japanese advertisements, where cartoons are accepted as a more general and less age specific medium.

The Japanese text has its focus on the process of remedy, in other words, the discourse in Figure 8-8 develops around scientific concepts. In Figure 8-9 (the British example) by contrast, the focus is on the person in pain, which is indicated by the salient use of a photographic image of a woman. In terms of the Interpersonal functions, therefore, it is possible to say that the Japanese example (Figure 8-9) puts a larger *Social Distance* from the viewer in the sense that Interpersonal functions in the British example allow the viewer, who is a potential consumer and perhaps 'patient-to-be', to share the common experience of the woman in the advertisement. In this respect, the representation of visual participants using a cartoon-style interacts with the viewer on more generalised and impersonal grounds, as opposed to the specific and personal.

Finally, with respect to textual organization in each example, I would like to point out the positioning of the image of the product (visual) in relation to the copy (verbal). In the case of Figure 8-8, it is located in the lower left corner, while it appears in the lower right corner in Figure 8-9. The positioning in Figure 8-8 can be explained by the 'primary' or dominating directionality of reading path (right to left), which is influenced by the main copy written in vertical style. According to Japanese visual semiotic, the image of the product in Figure 8-8 takes the spatial domain of 'Real-New', which makes it the focus of attention, something to be recognised. The image of the product in Figure 8-9 also is positioned in the domain of 'Real-New' in the Western visual semiotic. This suggests that the advertised products, the nucleus of information of both advertisements, are represented as something worth noting, not anything that should be taken-for-granted (conveying the meaning of New) as well as something solid and substantial to be relied on (carrying the value of Real).

The reading path in Figure 8-8 is greatly determined by the vertical writing of

Japanese, which intrinsically realises the directionality of right to left. The most likely reading path starts in the right hand side of verbal copy (written vertically), which is followed by the visual images in the middle band. This visual section has a reading path of top to bottom, which is indicated by the numerical numbering. From the 'third stage' of the visual images, the reading path moves to the bottom left hand side corner, which includes verbal copy and visual images. The overall dynamic that the reading path creates in this text is therefore the upper right - lower left diagonal.

The British example (Figure 8-9) realises the reading path with a dynamic of the upper left -lower right diagonal. That is, the first focal point is likely to rest on the face of the woman (on the top left part of the text), where the reading path originates. With the help of the vectorial line, formed by her shoulder line to the left arm, this upper left- lower right diagonal is completed where a visual image of the product is located. It is also possible to read this text vertically from top to bottom, which follows the flow of verbal elements: in which case, the starting point is in the box with verbal copy *"Powerful Pain Relief"*, which moves downward, following itemised verbal elements, *"Headache, Migraine, Period Pain, Backache, Toothache"*. This leads to the image of products (on the bottom right hand corner), which finally reaches the verbal section, which is placed along the bottom part of the text.

8.4 CONCLUSION

The examples I have used for my textual analysis in this chapter show that functional loads are distributed among visual and verbal semiotic modes, each of which makes use of different resources with different potentiality. I have referred to three aspects that

construct *integrated textuality:* Spatial distribution of functional loads via the visual and verbal modes; Semantic coherence among visual and verbal elements; Reading paths, which are subject to the degree of salience among visual and verbal elements. Three functional components are related to each other across different semiotic modes. Each semiotic mode, the visual and the verbal, contributes to the overall semiosis of a given text in specific ways. Their functions are often not interchangeable, in the sense that what is represented through the visual mode cannot mean the same if they are 'translated' or 'transformed' into verbal elements. This suggests the specific potentiality of each semiotic mode and that the consideration of the relationship between different semiotic modes is essential in order to understand meaning making.

Chapter IX FURTHER DIRECTIONS FOR VISUAL SEMIOTICS

The primary concern of this thesis has been to explore the way in which Japanese visual semiotics works by looking at Japanese advertising texts, in part, in a comparison with the visual semiotics of British advertising texts. I have drawn an analytical framework from Halliday's notion of language as social semiotic (1978, 1985) and more directly, used Kress and van Leeuwen's theory of 'visual grammar' (1990,1996), which focused exclusively on Western visual semiotics.

One of the main contributions of my research lies in the fact that my analysis of Japanese visual semiotics is an expansion of the scope of Kress and van Leeuwen's theoretical framework. That is, the documentation of Japanese visual semiotics using advertising texts has demonstrated a broader potential for Kress and van Leeuwen's theoretical framework for visual semiotic analysis in the context of non-Western semiotics. The flexibility and adaptability of the 'visual grammar' proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen across different semiotic systems validates Halliday's notion of three metafunctions; that they can be a useful apparatus for investigating communication not only in language but also through the visual mode of representation. The framework has also allowed me to look at visual representation in the Japanese examples in a systematic and revealing way and the comparison between Japanese and British examples has shed light on the systematic difference between them, most notably where visual representations of dynamics and the distribution of meaning in visual space is concerned.

For example, the difference in visual directionality (section **5.3**) or use of space (section **5.4**) between Japanese and British examples shows that there is a fundamental

difference in what I call the 'underlying spatial semiotic systems'. My semiotic analysis of Japanese and British visual representations has demonstrated that there is a connection between language (its writing system) and visual semiotics. In other words, in a multi-modal text, the visual mode is not an autonomous entity that operates independently of the verbal mode (language); these two different semiotic modes share common ground, which varies between one culture and another.

The visual directionality of the Japanese examples is the same as the directionality of the traditional writing system, which is written from right to left. As a contrasting case, in the British examples, visual directionality tends to share directionality with written English, which is left to right. When visual participants are represented with different directionality, or when there is a different distribution of elements in visual space, these phenomena cannot be explained within the domain of a single semiotic mode. The recognition of an existing 'underlying spatial semiotic system' in each culture, therefore, provides an explanation for the difference and cultural specificness of visual semiotics.

Another remarkable difference between Japanese and British visual semiotics comes from the difference in the writing systems of Japanese and English. The complexity of Japanese writing systems is realised in a number of complex ways. Compared to the English language, the Japanese writing system is more complicated in that it involves two kinds of writing units: syllabaries (*kanas*) and characters (*kanji*). Foreign influence (first of all, Chinese and then Western influence in the form of visual directionality and use of the Roman alphabet), the historical development of the Japanese language has produced complex layers of different writing methods. This, as it were, *creolisation* of the Japanese writing system has contributed greatly to the complexity of Japanese visual semiotics. For example, Figure 5-9, at the level of visual lexis, uses "Western" meanings

(the illustration of Westerners). Here, the visual lexis is realised through traditional Japanese visual syntax (that is related to the traditional writing system of Japanese, which is written from right to left).

This might illustrate particular features of visual lexis and visual syntax: visual lexis can adhere to the visual syntax of different cultures, whereas visual syntax is more fundamental to a culture and relatively 'rigid'. Therefore it is not only lexis but also syntax that functions as a means of representation for a specific culture. Contrary to the concept of universality in visual images, first proposed by Neurath (1937, 1948), my descriptive analysis of Japanese and British advertising texts have shown that visuals at the level of syntax are by no means culturally transparent but are in fact culturally specific.

The juxtaposition of visual lexis from Western culture and visual syntax that is indigenous to Japanese visual semiotics is a unique phenomenon that cannot be observed in the British examples. This is one other contribution of my research that gives wider scope to Kress and van Leeuwen (1990, 1996). The documentation of my data has demonstrated the complexity of the Japanese visual semiotic system (in the way in which visual lexis and visual syntax operate) in comparison to the relatively 'simple' British system.

My analysis of Japanese advertising texts (where more than one semiotic mode is involved: language and visual images) has also brought a new perspective on language. That is, the *visuality* of language is itself important; language can be viewed as a material entity and not just a linguistic one, such as semantic and syntactic.

For example, I have discussed Japanese advertisements, which are targeted at a British market and take advantage of the fact that non-Roman alphabetic Japanese letters and

characters can be read as a visual and material entity rather than as language 'to be understood'. This use of language as a visual and material entity is not restricted only to Japanese advertisements launched in Britain; language in British advertisements has more than one representational mode, by its manipulation of graphic devices such as the typeface, type size and the use of colour.

This 'visuality of language' seems to be growing more and more as a relevant issue in the era of global communication. There is extensive use of visual images where in the past the same role would have been served by language. The increasing use of visual images influences the existence of language as a representational mode and the change in the use of language in turn gives rise to a shift in the part that the visual mode plays in human communication.

The primary purpose of my research: the exploration of visual semiotics, has brought about a study of the cultural and social contexts in which texts are produced. The notions of Orientalism, Occidentalism and Counter-orientalism have provided a theoretical basis and a reference point for the consideration of ideology in visual images. My analysis has confirmed that ideology is realised through visual representations; Orientalism is still present in the form of stereotyped images of Japanese people which represent Japanese culture as exotic or peculiar (Figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6). Occidentalism is manifested in the use of Western visual lexis (Figures 4-1 and 4-2). The use of age-old stereotypes of Japaneseness in a positive way in Japanese advertisements for the British market can be taken as an ideological realisation of Counter-orientalism (Figures 4-5 and 4-7).

Beyond the notions of Orientalism, Occidentalism and Counter-orientalism (which are relatively well-trodden ideological frameworks), my documentation of Japanese and British visual semiotics has also demonstrated the relationship between modes of

representation and broader socio-cultural contexts in which they are used and how they are used. The use, choice and distribution of representational modes are partly determined by the type of text and this represents assumptions about who the reader or the viewer is and their social location.

Language has been described in detail as a means of the representation of ideology (Hodge and Kress, 1988, 1993; Kress, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1996; Fowler, Hodge and Kress, 1979; Fowler, 1991; Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a; van Dijk, 1985; Simpson, 1993). Central to this issue is that language is never homogeneous but is a realisation of various socio-cultural practices (Halliday 1978). For instance, there is a different use of language according to class, age and regional factors as well as to situational variation in language use like 'register'.

In my view, visual images are no exception. My research has begun to explore how visual images as well as language are heterogeneous in these socio-cultural contexts. Visual images might be taken as a homogeneous phenomenon that are commonly present in a given culture, because its heterogeneity has not been clearly recognised in comparison to language. However, given what I have investigated in this research, I would argue that visual images can be as heterogeneous as language in the way in which they are related to the socio-cultural environment in which they appear. This enables us to view visual semiotics in parallel to language rather than treating them as a separate or inferior entity.

My research has covered visual semiotics in printed advertising texts, which are realised in two-dimensional visual space. Within the scope of my project, the meaning making dealt with has been restricted to certain textual objects. As a suggestion for further studies in the area of visual semiotics, there are three-dimensional 'textual

objects', such as buildings and gardens, which could be considered as data for semiotic analysis. These 'textual objects', whether two or three dimensional, can all be considered as *signs*. By looking into the formal structures from which these and other objects are constructed from a cross cultural perspective, it is possible to explore cultural specificness and how that is manifested in relation to the value systems of cultures, as all signs reflect the underlying value systems of a culture.

In the domain of information technology, there has been an increase in the use of visual icons and images in general, such as in the computer's ubiquitous graphical user interface. The digitalisation of images and the use of facsimile machines, not only in a work environment but also in a domestic context, is evidence of the further visualisation of information. More and more information is being conveyed in the visual mode. This suggests that there is a need for a systematic means of analysing existing and emerging forms of communication, which are no longer language centred. As my research has demonstrated, visual images are not culturally neutral but deeply conditioned by the culture in which they are produced. Therefore, sensitivity towards the cultural specificness of information conveyed through the visual mode or combined with language is going to be increasingly necessary for the productive understanding of texts.

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